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THE
SPIRIT AND BEAUTY
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION:
SELECTIONS FROM
CHATEAUBRIAND'S GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY.
TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,
WITH
AN INTRODUCTION,
BY
EMMA B. STORK.

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INTRODUCTION; WITH SOME INTERESTING PARTICULARS IN THE LIFE OF CHATEAUBRIAND.

WE offer no apology for presenting this purely original translation of choice selections from Chateaubriand's Genius of Christianity. Our aim is to do good, and, if possible, to displace the *cheap* literature of the day, especially the works of Sand, Balzac, Sue, Dumas, and a host of popular French writers, by a clear and healthful rill of wholesome waters. We are aware that a beautiful and complete English translation of this work has recently been published. But, as portions of our own translation appeared some years ago in the "Evangelical Magazine," and in the "Home Journal," and were favorably received, we were induced to complete our original design, to prepare a small volume, in order to present to miscellaneous readers this excellent production at a moderate price, as all the other editions were large and costly.

We have consulted our *liberty of conscience*, to

expunge, in our translation, some of the sentiments of the pious and faithful Chateaubriand. Some remarks have been intentionally modified from the original (in a few instances), where they were tinctured with the Popish doctrine of penances. Others are omitted for the same reason. We have no sympathy with the austeries and penances of the Roman Catholic Church. We believe she is a dark-way to the kingdom of Heaven: many noble, holy souls have lived and died in her communion: we will gratefully accept their *good*, and follow Chateaubriand, Fenelon, Pascal, and a host of worthies, *only* so far as they followed Christ our Lord. Our Protestant Churches, although emerging from the Roman Catholic, and therefore rejoicing in a clearer day, even *these* are, as yet, but dimly illuminated; many dark spots are upon our Sun, and we are watching and waiting for its millennial brightness. The Bride, the elect Church (from all communions), shall yet arise, and “shine as the sun, and be terrible as an army with banners;” but the world yet languisheth in the shadows which her failure to attain unto perfect love casts over her.

Chateaubriand says, with equal simplicity and beauty, that with Pascal he *beholds Jesus Christ everywhere*. He seeks not to prove that Christianity is excellent, because it descends from God;

but it comes from God because it is excellent. He is to be regarded as a moderate and enlightened Catholic, and he manifested a liberal and benevolent feeling towards all denominations of Christians. “Are they not all of the great family of Jesus Christ?” Few are aware that he is, without a single exception, the most eloquent writer of the present age; that his writings combine the strongest love of rational freedom with the warmest inspiration of Christian devotion.” We were delighted with his letter to M. De Fontanes, criticising Madame De Stael’s theory of *Perfectibility*, for the discriminating and valuable thought it contains; and from which we have culled some beautiful sentiments. We confess our surprise that it has been omitted in the edition of 1815, and also of 1856, as it bears so directly, in its authority and judgment, upon the dangerous doctrines and tendencies of the present age. Whoever will read the description of Madame De Stael’s disease, in the letter to which we have referred, will be forcibly impressed with its resemblance, in its general features, to the women-miseries and wrongs of the present day. They seem to float in a *peculiar aroma* of sadness. Verily, “there is nothing *new* under the sun;” and “what has been will be.” Women-skeptics, and *manly*-women, ever have been, and always will be; and we would most affectionately and

devoutly raise our feeble voice, in expostulation and entreaty, to our lovely and beloved sisters, to pause ere, in their temerity, their footsteps stumble upon the dark mountains of error which oppress the land, and which threaten to engulf this generation (like those of old) in their deep and awful chasms. “Oh! that they were *wise*, that they would consider their *latter end*.” As it appears to us, there never was an age so sorely beset, as is the present one, by spiritualism on the one side, and strong-minded women on the other, and delusive dreamers innumerable. Yet, although starting from diverse points, their end is the same — insanity and destruction. They rank under two classes—the credulous, and the incredulous—believers in *nothing*, and believers in *all things*; the one class making a god of themselves, and the other making gods of *everything*—far worse than the heathen, who bow down to stocks and stones, they are absorbed in raps, and sounds, and the most puerile nonentities. In departing from the fountain of living waters, “they have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns which can hold no water.” “The literature of disorder,” as it has been most appropriately termed, has much to do with this state of morals; and we are deeply concerned to obviate this fatal tendency, by inducing a purer taste, to present the Bible as the only rule of faith and practice. Chateaubriand,

with all the eloquence of an enthusiastic and noble patriotism, raised his voice to save France, in the memorable “Reign of Terror;” and he was, as we think, instrumental in awaking the careless and deluded to a more hopeful and Christian spirit. The highest promotion was offered to him by the Emperor, if he would support his power; but, where he could not approve, no price could buy him. He was an honest, noble patriot, and defended the oppressed and down-trodden; and he said that, over every Christian republic, should be written in golden letters: “No Slavery.” Would to God there were more such, in our day of deterioration and corruption. France acknowledged his ameliorating influence; and we feel satisfied that his ardent piety, and pure taste, are calculated to eclipse and obliterate the flimsy and pernicious writings which have so long contaminated the press. The Bible, the open Bible, can alone cleanse the polluted stream which is fast bearing us onward to the whirlpool of destruction and perdition. The rising generation are fearless of everything, and forgetful of that August Being “who has power to destroy both soul and body in hell.” It is a huge mistake, to suppose that we may fearlessly see, and hear, and read *all* that comes under our notice. No! we are exhorted *to fear*, lest our eternal destiny be imperilled; “to be wise con-

cerning good, but simple in our knowledge of evil." It seems a little matter, to read a bad book, but eternal death may be in its pages. With ourselves it has ever been a matter of most earnest concern, and of devout petition for Divine guidance, lest the serpent-poison should lurk therein, and lest the page we ponder should breathe contagion over our soul. "Happy is the man who feareth always." Our responsibility as Christian patriots, and more especially as parents, may be best illustrated by facts. In an Essay by Dr. Bittle, we read: "that a Christian father, in speaking of Tom Paine's writings, commended their political acumen, in the presence of his son. The youth obtained all his works, and read them, and became insane, and was confined in the asylum. The father became so distressed with the result of his heedless remark, that he put an end to his wretched existence. We hope we may be pardoned for our earnestness on this subject, as we love the young, and wish them to attain to the perfect stature to which they are destined as reasonable, and above all, as immortal beings. Without disrespect or injustice to Chateaubriand, we flatter ourselves that our sympathies run in the same channel; and that he, *being dead*, may yet *speak*, through our feeble instrumentality. He confesses that he was betrayed, in early life, into skeptical sentiments by *bad books*, and *through the company*

he kept; from which the prayers, and tears, and death of his mother and sister, through the Divine blessing, rescued him. Our humble attempt we commit, in faith and trust, to that Divine Saviour who can evolve strength out of weakness; who uses the feeble things of the world to confound the wise; yea, and things that are not to bring to nought things that are — that no flesh should glory in his presence.

As not inappropriate to our design, we quote some startling facts, selected from the “Methodist Protestant,” and from an article styled “The Literature of Disorder.” “An able writer has traced the anarchical principles which came so prominently to the surface in 1848, in Paris, to what he calls the literature of disorder, which, he says, prevailed in France for nearly twenty years preceding. Unfortunately, the evil worked by this literature of disorder was not confined to France. It spread, through cheap translations of Sue, Dumas, and Sand, to the United States. It is no unsound idea, on the contrary it is pitiable truth, that much of the lawlessness, as well as licentiousness, in which this generation exceeds the last, is to be traced to the influence of this French literature, and to the American imitation of it. Nor is this all. . . . It is *taught* under the mask of philanthropy, and with the cant of being the true road to human progress. . . . Is it ex-

aggerating, therefore, to trace the growth of disorder in the United States in part to this vicious literature, and the vicious philosophy inculcated in too many journals? Neither the 'Vigilance Committees' of San Francisco, nor the lawlessness that raged in Kansas, nor worse evils as yet only gestating in the womb of the future, surprise us. When men sow the storm, they must look to reap the whirlwind. There is but one way to check the evil. It is to return to the principles of our forefathers; to hold up the law of all laws, the law of order; to be mutually forbearing, self-denying, and kindly-affectioned one to another. If this is not done, ruin will yet overtake us, ruin both social and political; and a few generations hence historians will write over the fallen temple of our liberties: '*fuit Illium.*' The continued increase of these publications is sufficient evidence *that they are read* (says the Methodist Protestant). An estimate, made some few years ago, put down the number of different classes of novels at about six thousand; and since that time the annual increase has been marvellous. 'In Great Britain alone, one hundred thousand dollars were expended in one year, by one firm, simply in advertising *three* works, and these of a licentious character.' The religious press should speak out plainly. The Dublin University Magazine says: 'We do not hesitate to say that such works exert

a most deteriorating and enervating moral influence.' The excitement is intensely injurious to everything like healthful mental development; and, not unfrequently, it acts upon the body as perniciously as upon the mind. Progress at college life is arrested by the novel; the hand of the industrious artizan is paralyzed by the novel; maternal love turns from the couch of suffering childhood to finish the concluding chapters of some fascinating novel; the holy hours of the Sabbath are prostituted to this delusive mental intoxication; runaway matches, undertaken in delirious romance, and ending in bitter and life-long remorse, are promoted by the novel. . . . The attention of Christian people should be called to this subject. They should remonstrate with those who are indifferent to its effects upon the children entrusted to their care for mental and moral training."

As some account of the life of Chateaubriand cannot fail to interest the reader, we append what interesting and important particulars we could glean from reliable authority. In the Biographical Notice of Dr. Charles J. White, we read that "René Francis Augustus, Viscount de Chateaubriand, was born at Saint Malo, in France, on the 4th of September, 1768. His family, on the paternal side, was one of the most ancient in Brittany." He had an extraordinary memory, a proud and

sensitive heart. “His father designed him for the naval profession, but Chateaubriand manifested some inclination for the ecclesiastical state. Diverted, however, from this project by the reading of pernicious books, he exchanged his sentiments of piety for those of infidelity; and, in his solitary situation, with the passions for his guides, he became the sport of the most extravagant fancies.” He became weary of life, and had to combat against the temptation to commit suicide. “He left France, alarmed by the revolutionary spirit, and embarked, in January, 1791, for the United States of America. A few days after his arrival in Baltimore, he proceeded to Philadelphia; and, having a letter of introduction to General Washington, from Colonel Armand (Marquis de la Rouëne), who had served in the War of American Independence, he lost no time in calling on the President. Washington received him with great kindness, and with his usual simplicity of manners. On the following day he had the honor of dining with the President, whom he never saw afterward, but whose character left an indelible impression upon his mind. ‘There is a virtue,’ he says, ‘in the look of a great man.’* On leaving Philadelphia, he visited New York, Boston, and the other principal cities of the Union, where he was sur-

* Mémoires d’Outre-Tombe.

prised to find, in the manners of the people, the cast of modern times, instead of that ancient character which he had pictured to himself. From the haunts of civilized life he turned to those wild regions which were then chiefly inhabited by the untutored savage; and, as he travelled from forest to forest, from tribe to tribe, his poetical mind feasted upon the grandeur and beauty of that virginal nature which presented itself to his contemplation. At the Falls of Niagara he was twice in the most imminent danger of losing his life, by his enthusiastic desire to enjoy the most impressive view of the wonderful cataract. In 1792, he returned to his native country, where he had the happiness of again embracing his mother. At Saint Malo he formed a matrimonial alliance with Mademoiselle de Lavigne, a lady of distinction. . . . He was sorely tried by the afflictions of his family. He had received the distressing intelligence that his brother and sister-in-law, with his friend, Malesherbes, had been guillotined by the revolutionary harpies, and that his wife and sister had been imprisoned at Rennes, and his aged mother at Paris. . . . The political revolution of February, 1848, which hurled Louis Philippe from the throne, did not surprise him, because he had predicted it in 1830. Drawing near to his end when the insurrection of June broke forth at Paris, he spoke with admiration of the heroic

death of the Archbishop; and, having received the last rites of religion, with great sentiments of piety, he expired on the 4th of July, 1848."

The original of the following work (as remarked by Rev. H. Kett), as soon as it was published, was received as a production of uncommon excellence, and it accordingly shone with extraordinary brilliancy. The work is worthy of so favorable a reception; and it displays the various and attractive charms, and the beneficial and widely-extended influence of the Christian religion. Its author does not expatiate upon its external evidences, to prove that the Christian religion had a Divine origin; but he takes another, and more delightful road, for he confirms its truth by displaying its Beauties. Herein the reader will find powerful argument to convince his reason, sublime images to delight his fancy, and pathetic sentiments to touch his heart. Christianity is the great diffusive principle, the operative power which has removed ages of darkness, and opened upon our pathway the sunlight of Heaven. Chateaubriand addresses the heart, and he is truly original; his fruits and his flowers lose nought of their freshness in passing through his hands; they are gathered by himself, and they are presented to us fresh and sparkling with the crystal dew of the morning. "The strain of pensive and solemn sentiment which pervades the

work can be best accounted for by adverting to some particular circumstances of the author's life. He informs us that, during the horrors of the French revolution, 'he was doomed to six years of exile and misfortunes;' and some events occurred in his family, sufficient to overwhelm any common mind with despair, but which gave to his the most salutary turn. 'Those who attack Christianity,' he observes, 'have often endeavoured to excite doubts as to the sincerity of its friends and champions. . . . My religious opinions have not always been the same as they are at present. Offended by the abuses of some institutions, and by the vices of some men, I was formerly betrayed into declamation and sophistical arguments against Christianity. I might throw the blame upon my youth, upon the madness of revolutionary times, and upon the company I kept; but I wish rather to condemn myself, for I do not know how to defend that which is indefensible. I will simply relate the manner in which Divine Providence was pleased to call me back to my duty. My mother, after having been thrown, at seventy-two years of age, into a dungeon, where she was an eye-witness of the destruction of some of her children, expired at last upon a pallet, to which her misfortunes had reduced her. The remembrance of my errors diffused great bitterness over her last days. In her dying moments she charged one of

my sisters to call me back to that religion in which I had been educated. My sister, faithful to the solemn trust, communicated to me the last request of my mother. When her letter reached me beyond the seas, far from my native country, my sister was no more; she had died in consequence of the rigors of her imprisonment. These two voices issuing from the tomb; this death, which served as the interpreter of death; struck me with irresistible force. I became a Christian. *I did not yield, I allow, to great supernatural illumination; but my conviction of the truth of Christianity sprung from the heart. I wept, and I believed.'*

"The appearance of the work of this great and admired author in an English dress would prove, it was thought, a valuable addition to our stock of national literature."

E. B. S.

PHILADELPHIA, March, 1858.

THE
GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE BIBLE.

How wonderful is that book which commences at Genesis, the opening of the world, and concludes with Revelations at the restitution of all things ! Which is announced in the clearest style, and which terminates with the most emblematical language ! May we not conclude that Moses is grand and simple, like the creation of the world, and the innocence of the primitive race whom he describes ; and that all is terrible and supernatural, in the last prophesy, in keeping with the awful visitation upon wicked nations, and the final adjustment of all things, which are therein represented ? The sacred books of heathen nations are uncongenial to our taste and manners. The Zendavesta of the Parsees, the Vidam of the Brahmins, the Koran of the Turks, and the Edda of the Scandinavians, the Sanscrit poems, the maxims of Confucius, are not either wonderful or

attractive to us ; we find nothing in them extraordinary, or beyond our usual association of ideas. In thought, and in expression, they may be compared with each other. The Bible alone is an original production, and stands out as an isolated monument, in solitary grandeur ! Explain it to a Tartar, to a Caffre, to an American savage ; put it into the hands of a Bonze, or a Dervis, and it is a curious fact that they will be equally astonished by it. Twenty authors, living at periods very remote from each other, wrote the Scriptures ; and, although they are composed in as many different styles, yet they are each inimitable and unrivalled by any other writer. The Old and the New Testament, while differing in style, are equally impressive in their Divine authority and inspiration. And these are not the only discoveries which men have found in the Bible ; even those who will not believe in the authenticity of this book, are compelled to acknowledge, in spite of themselves, that there is a peculiar unction in this same Bible. Deists and Atheists, of all classes, are moved, by some magnetic impulse, to the perusal of this so much admired, and yet disparaged book. There is no emergency in human life but a corresponding text is there to meet it, as if designed for the particular occasion. It would be difficult to persuade us that all possible contingencies, fortunate or adverse, could have

been anticipated, with all their results, in a book penned by man. For it is certain that the Scriptures contain the account of the creation of the world, and the prediction of its end: the groundwork of every human science: all political precepts and forms of government, from the patriarchal down to the despotic — from the simplicity of pastoral life, to the corruption of idleness and luxury: the moral precepts applicable to all ranks and to all circumstances of life, whether prosperous or adverse: finally, every variety of style — styles which, forming a perfect whole, yet of many different parts, an exclusive composition, which no genius of man could produce.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

ONE of the chief Christian doctrines yet remains to be examined — the *condition of a future life, with its rewards and punishments.*

But we must not attempt the subject, without first considering the two grand pillars which form the basis of all religions — the *existence of God*, and the *immortality of the soul*. The natural development of our subject requires this study, since it is only *after* we have “kept the faith” here below, that we shall be received into those mansions prepared for *believers*, beyond the sky.

Ever faithful to our plan, we shall discard all abstract arguments, and confine our attention to the wonders of nature around us, and to the moral and poetical aspects of our subject. Among the ancients, Plato and Cicero, and in our day, Clarke and Leibnitz, have given proofs, through metaphysics and through geometry, of the existence of the Supreme Being. The finest minds, in every age, have adopted this consolatory doctrine. What matters it if infidels *have rejected it*? Cannot the Divine Being exist without their suffrage? Even *death* requires we should argue for his prerogative; for the *grave*, to which infidelity consigns man as his end, offers no attraction to his manhood. Let us forsake these miserable disputants, who fail even to agree among themselves: those, on the contrary, who do believe in a superintending Providence, harmonize upon the chief points of their doctrine; while the men who deny a Creator are incessantly disputing upon the origin of their being; a fathomless abyss opens before them; they need a sounding-line for its depths, but they know not whence to project it. Moreover, there is, in all error, a certain *moral obliquity*; so that the mote in a brother's eye at once disgusts and offends, while the bosom sin is tolerated and overlooked: thus even Atheists are, among themselves, in an eternal dispute.

CHARACTER OF THE TRUE GOD.

IT is a wonderful fact, that the Jehovah of the Old Testament should be the God of the New; or, that Jacob's God should also be the Saviour, Christ Jesus the Lord—that same Almighty Being who rendeth the heavens with His lightning glance, is yet the same merciful God, blessing us with innocence and peace. “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” (Matt. ch. vi., v. 28, 29.)

We rejoice that, everywhere around us, are living proofs of the *poetical superiority* of the Christian's God over the gods of heathen mythology. . . . “It is a vain presumption to attempt to contrast the *finite* with the *infinite*; the one is but the shadow of the other, as *created* intelligence is but a feeble emanation from the *Omniscient Creator*. Ingenious fiction is but the imitation of truth; and all its power is due to its counterfeit appearance.”*

* M. de la Harpe.

GENERAL SPECTACLE OF THE UNIVERSE.

THERE is a God! The humble flowret of the vale, and the lofty cedar of the forest, proclaim His handiwork; the buzzing insect murmurs His praise; the elephant salutes Him at the early dawn; and the birds, amid the shade trees, chant to Him; while the thunderbolt reveals His power, and the ocean echoes His majesty and greatness. Man only has said “There is no God.” Can there be a creature so stolid, as never to look heavenward in his sorrow, or to regard the earth and his fellows, as he rejoices in prosperity? Has nature been, indeed, so far above his comprehension, that he considers *all* as the hap-hazard of accident? But *has chance* been able to constrain chaotic and irregular matter, and to produce such an arrangement of perfect order? Man might be called the *revealed thought of God*; and the *universe, His imagination made visible*.

Those who have admired the beauties of nature, as proofs of a superior intelligence, ought to note one important circumstance which adds greatly to its sphere of wonders: it is, that of motion and rest; light and darkness; the regular return of the seasons, with the planetary bodies, which vary the decorations of the world, and which only appear to succeed each other, and are in reality per-

manent. It is not the spectacle, but the spectator, who changes; the scene which becomes darkened to us, is brilliantly illuminated for our opposite neighbors. Thus, in His perfect work, God has united *absolute permanence* with *progressive continuance*; the first is placed in time, the second extends into space; by the former, the embellishments of the universe are one, infinite, yet always the same; by the latter, they are multiplied, finished, and yet ever new; without the one, there would be no majesty in creation; without the other, there would be monotonous sameness. On this globe *time* bears a new relation to us; the smallest of its fractions becomes a complete whole, which comprehends all, and by which everything is modified, from the crushing of an insect to the birth of a world; each moment contains in itself a miniature eternity.

Let us, in thought, collect together the most beautiful changes in nature: suppose we could behold, at once, all the seasons of the year, with all the hours of the day; the freshness of spring-time, with the riches of autumn; a cloudy evening, and a stormy sky; the prairie enamelled with flowers, and the forest despoiled by the tempest, with waving fields of grain: we should then form some conception of the grandeur of the universe. Whilst you are admiring this sun retiring beneath the western clouds, another observer beholds him

coming forth from the east, clad in his golden drapery of the morning. By what wonderful magic does that old star pale away in the dusky twilight of summer, and then suddenly emerge into the brilliant young orb, withdrawing her fleecy veil, in the dawn's dewy fragrance?

Daily the sun arises, mounts to his zenith, and then sleeps upon the world; or, rather, our senses deceive us, there is no real sunrise, noon, or sunset. All is reduced to a fixed point, from whence this day-god emits, at one and the same time, three lights, from one unique substance. This triple splendor is, perhaps, one of the most beautiful natural phenomena; for it gives us an idea of the everlasting greatness and almighty power of God; it also becomes to us a glowing image of His adorable Trinity. Let us conceive of a scene of nature abandoned to the movements of matter alone; what would happen? Why, we should see the clouds, following the laws of gravitation, falling perpendicularly upon the earth, or rearing themselves into vast airy pyramids; then the air would become either too heavy, or too ethereal, for the organs of respiration. The moon would be too near us, or too far off, revolving round and round, now changing into a blood-red hue, and then growing dark through enormous spots, or taking up the whole

firmament with its single orb. Seized with a strange dizziness, she would dash about like a ball, or spin around like a top, turning topsy-turvy over the earth. The stars would appear as if stricken with the same vertigo ; it would be a scene of frightful commotions ; suddenly summer would appear, and would be immediately arrested by winter ; the cow-boy would lead the pleiades, and the lion would roar among the lambs ; there the planets would rush with the rapidity of lightning ; here they would be immovably fixed, sometimes collecting in groups, forming a new milky way — then, disappearing altogether, they would withdraw the curtain of the world, and, as Tertullian expresses it, they would reveal the abysses of eternity. But such terrifying scenes we shall not behold ere the day when God, withdrawing from the universe, will have no occasion to destroy, but merely to abandon it to its orphanage.

MYSTERY.

LIFE's holiest influences are as an *enigma*, full of mysterious import, and shadow forth a meaning, otherwise impenetrable, in objects the most beautiful, or grand, or impressive.

The most striking sentiments are those which affect us somewhat confusedly: modesty, pure love, virtuous friendship, are enveloped in secrets. Even loving hearts but imperfectly comprehend each other; the soul's inner depths are never revealed to mortal eye. Innocence, in her turn, is she not the most surprising of mysteries? Why is infancy so happy, but because she sees not the future? And what saddens old age so much as this *sight-seeing*, this world-knowledge; happily for her, when this life's mysteries are closed, those of death will open. If it is thus with true sentiments, it is the same with the virtues; the most angelical are those which, flowing forth immediately from God, are like charity which loves to veil herself amid her own beneficent influences. The pleasure of meditation has also its unsealed fountains, as we shall discover in reflecting upon the operations of the intellect. The earliest inhabitants of Asia themselves interpreted by symbols, in imitation of the profoundness of the Divine

nature. To what study do we most frequently recur? Is it not to that which always leaves us something to desire, and which rivets our attention towards an infinite perspective? If we lose our way in the woods, a natural instinct teaches us to avoid the plains, where all is opened up to our vision at a single glance; we run on, in search of the forest, those cradles of religion, those hidden groves, whose trembling shadows and startling sounds, and solemn silence, are full of mysterious meaning; those solitudes, where the primitive fathers of the Church were fed by the bees and the ravens, and where holy men enjoyed such heavenly communing, that they exclaimed: "Lord, it is enough; we shall expire with joy, unless strengthened to support this unspeakable glory." In fine, we do not stop to gaze upon a modern well-known monument; but what a fund of thought is furnished to the traveller, if, upon a desert isle in the ocean's midst, a bronze statue, with mutilated arms pointing to the horizon, and covered with hieroglyphics, and time-worn by the rocking waves, is suddenly discovered.

The universe is a mystery, not yet explained, or manifest to finite comprehension. Man himself, what is he but a curious riddle? From whence comes the lightning-flash which we call existence, and into what midnight gloom is it suddenly extinguished?

The Eternal has placed life and death, under the form of two phantom vessels, at the extreme limits of our career: the one brings in the wonderful mechanism of our life, which the other eagerly hastens to destroy.

It is not, then, surprising, considering this natural tendency in man for the hidden or mysterious, that religious worship, among all nations, should have been based upon impenetrable secrets: the Selli pondered over the astonishing words of the doves of Dodona; the inhabitants of India, Persia, Ethiopia, Scythia, Gaul, Scandinavia, each had their caverns, their sacred mountains, or oaks, where the Brahmins, the Magi, the Gymnosophists, or the Druids, uttered the inexplicable oracles of immortals. God forbid that we should ever compare these mysteries to the mysteries of the true religion; or the unsearchable wonders of the Lord of heaven and earth, to the puerile obscurities of *these gods*, the work of *men's hands!* We would simply note the fact, that there is no religion without its mysteries; therein is contained both the worship and the *sacrifice*; God is alone the grand secret of nature; the Divinity was represented, in Egypt, *veiled*, and the Sphynx (the emblem of mystery) was perched upon her temples.

PARADISE.

WE must confess, that the “Paradise Lost,” of Milton, has the same effect as the “Infernal Regions,” of Dante, of which we have spoken in a previous chapter. It is, that the *marvellous* is the *subject-matter*, and not the *machinery* of the work. But we find herein striking beauties, which belong exclusively to our Christian religion. The poem opens in hell, and yet there is nothing in this beginning which offends the rule of simplicity laid down by Aristotle. Such a wonderful edifice must needs have a striking and majestic portico, so that the reader may be introduced into this unknown world, without danger of losing himself. Milton is the earliest poet who has concluded his epic with the misfortune of his principal personage, which is contrary to the rule generally adopted. We take the liberty of thinking that there is something more solemnly interesting, and much more in natural accordance with the condition of humanity, in giving a sad termination to a poem, than its being brought to a happy conclusion. We might even assert that the catastrophe in the “Iliad” is tragical. For, even granting that the son of Peleus attains the end of his desires, yet the conclusion of the poem leaves upon

us a sentiment of deep sadness : we have just witnessed the funeral obsequies of Patroclus, and Priam removing the body of Hector, and the grief of Hecuba and Andromache, and we remotely foreshadow the downfall of Troy, and the death of Achilles. The infancy of Rome poetized by Virgil is, undoubtedly, a grand subject. Then, what shall we say of the subject of a poem, which describes a catastrophe in which we ourselves are involved, and which portrays to us not only the founder of such and such a society, but the Father of mankind. Milton does not entertain us with battles, funeral rites, camps, or besieged cities ; he carries us back to the first idea of God, revealed in the creation of the world, and to the earliest sentiments of man issuing from the hands of the Creator. Can there be anything more majestic, or more interesting, than this study of the juvenescent workings, the earliest movements of the heart of man ? Adam awakens to life ; he opens his eyes ; he knows not from whence he came. He looks up at the firmament ; by an impulse of desire, he would transport himself towards this arched roof, and he discovers that he is standing with his head elevated to the skies. He examines his limbs ; he runs, he stops, he wishes to speak, and he speaks. He names, naturally, the objects which he beholds ; and he exclaims : “ O thou sun, and ye trees, forests, hills, valleys,

divers animals!" These creatures he calls by their appropriate names. And why does Adam thus address himself to the sun and to the trees? "Sun, trees," does he say, "*know you the name of Him who has created me?*" Thus the consciousness of the existence of the Supreme Being is the earliest sentiment which man experiences: the first want which is felt, is this want of God! How sublime is Milton in this passage! But would he have been thus elevated in his expressions, if the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ had been unknown to him? God reveals himself to Adam; the creature and the Creator discourse together; they speak about solitude. We will suppose these reflections. Man was not designed for solitude. "It is not *good* that man should be alone." Adam sleeps; God draws even from the side of our first parent a new creature, and presents her to him upon awaking. "Grace is in all her steps, heaven in her eye, in all her gestures dignity and love." She is called Woman, because she is created from man. "Unto her man shall cleave, forsaking his father and his mother." "They twain shall be *one*; whom God has joined together, let no man put asunder." How unhappy will be the lot of all, who respond not to these decrees of God! The poet continues to unfold these grand aspects of human nature—this sublime reason of Christianity. The character of the wo-

man is admirably drawn in the fatal fall. Eve falls through *self-love*; she flatters herself that she is strong enough to be exposed alone; she cares not that Adam should attend her to the places where she cultivates her flowers. This beautiful creature, who believes herself invincible, and, by reason of her weakness, knows not that a single word can overcome her. Woman is often portrayed to us as the victim of her vanity. When Isaiah threatens the daughters of Jerusalem, he warns them that their “ear-rings, their rings, and bracelets, and veils,” will be taken away from them.

We have remarked, in our own time, a striking example of this character. During the Revolution there were many females who had given multiplied proofs of heroism; and yet, whose virtue had afterwards been sacrificed through a ball, an ornament, or a feast. Thus is explained one of the mysterious truths concealed in the Scriptures: in condemning woman to pain and sorrowing travail, God has endowed her with firmness to endure suffering; but, as a punishment of her fault, she has been permitted to feel her weakness, in offering so faint a resistance against the fascinations of pleasure. Thus Milton calls woman — nature’s fair defect — “Beautiful blemish of nature.” The manner in which the English poet has conducted the fall of our first parent deserves to be ex-

amined. An ordinary mind would have assuredly overturned the world the very moment that Eve carried the fatal fruit to her lips; Milton is satisfied that earth should heave a deep sigh as she recognizes her offspring, Death, which is henceforth entailed upon her; it is still more wonderful, because the immediate effect is less startling. What calamities does not this patient calmness lead us to anticipate in the future! Tertullian, in searching out the reason why the universe was not dissolved by the crimes of men, assigns this as the sublime cause, namely, the *long suffering* and the *patience of God*. When Eve offers to her spouse the fruit of knowledge, he does not abase himself in the dust, nor does he rend his garments, nor cry out aloud. He is seized with fearful trembling, he is dumb, with parted lips, and anxious eye riveted upon his companion. He perceives the enormity of the crime; on the one side, if he disobeys, he becomes subject to death; on the other, if he remains faithful, he retains his immortality, but he loses his bride, from henceforth condemned to the tomb. He *can* refuse the fruit; but *can* he live without Eve? the conflict is soon decided, and all the world is sacrificed for love. Far from overwhelming his companion with reproaches, Adam consoles her, and receives the fatal apple from her hand. At this consummation of crime, there is as yet no perceptible

change in nature ; the faint rumblings of passion's voice are heard only in the heart of the unhappy pair. Adam and Eve sleep ; but innocence no longer guides their pleasant dreams. They soon start up out of this agitated slumber, as from unrest. It is then that their sin is presented to them. "What have we done !" exclaims Adam ; "why art thou naked ? Let us seek a covering for ourselves, that we be not discovered to our shame." No vestments can conceal this humiliating consciousness of wrong-doing. Meanwhile their sin is known in heaven ; the angels mourn with a holy sadness, but "*that sadness mixed with pity did not alter their bliss ;*" most Christian expression, and of a sublime tenderness. God sends his Son to judge the guilty ; the Judge descends. He calls Adam ; "Where art thou ?" Adam hides himself. "Lord, I am afraid to appear before Thee, because I am naked." "How knowest thou that thou art naked ? Hast thou eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge ?" What a dialogue ? There is nothing herein of human invention. Adam confesses his crime ; God pronounces the sentence : "Man ! by the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread ; cursed is the earth, for thy sake ; dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Woman, thou shalt travail in pain and sorrow." Behold, in a few words, the history of mankind. We know not how the reader

is affected by this scene ; but, as for ourselves, there is something so grand and extraordinary in this Genesis picture, that we acknowledge it is beyond all critical analysis ; language fails to give expression to our admiration ; her art has become weak and futile. The Son of God ascends again to heaven, after having clothed the guilty. Now the famous drama opens, in which Adam and Eve are the operators, and in which it is supposed that Milton has consecrated an event in his own life, in the reconciliation between himself and his first wife. We are satisfied of this fact, that all great writers embody their own history in their works. They portray, in the experience of another, their own heart-struggles ; and the finest touches of genius are the result of these soul-remembrances. Adam retires alone to pass the night under an arbor, but the very air is changed around him ; chilling vapors and leaden clouds obscure the skies ; the lightning has stricken the trees ; all living creatures are fleeing from the face of man ; the wolf is pursuing the lamb ; while the vulture is decoying the dove. Adam sinks into despair ; he would gladly return to his mother earth. But a doubt afflicts him, and causes him to hesitate. If he should have within him yet a spark of immortality ? What, if this breath of God which he has received should never be extinguished ? If even death (or annihilation)

should not be to him a last resource? If he should indeed be condemned to an eternity of misery? No questions of philosophy could be more beautiful or attractive, more elevated and solemn. Not only the ancient poets have been unable to build up despair upon a similar foundation, but even moralists themselves have nothing to compare with it in grandeur. Eve has heard the groanings of her spouse. She approaches towards him. Adam repulses her. Eve casts herself at his feet, bathed in tears. Adam is moved; he raises up the mother of mankind. Eve proposes to him a life of celibacy, and that she should die, in order to save her race. This noble despair, springing so naturally from a woman, as much by its excess as by its generosity, affects our primitive father. What reply can he make to his wife? “Eve, the hope which thou buildest upon the tomb, and thy contempt of death, proves to me that thou hast within thyself a living principle, which can never be destroyed!” The unhappy pair resolve to pray to God, and to petition the mercy of the Eternal. They humbly prostrate themselves before Him, and with one heart and voice solicit mercy from Him, who alone can speak pardon and peace to the trembling conscience. These prayers reach the heavenly abode; the Son takes upon himself the

office of presenting them to His Father. We admire reasonably the *crippled* prayers in the Iliad, which follow the injury, in order to make some reparation for the evils committed. However, Milton will contrast favorably even with this distinguished allegory. These breathings from a contrite heart, which have found the only way in which the sighs of a lost world must soon follow; these lowly vows, which are now mingling with the incense which burns before the Holy of Holies; these penitential tears, which cause rejoicings among celestial spirits; these tears, which are presented to the Eternal by the Redeemer of the world; these tears, which move God himself (so powerful is the first prayer of sorrowing and repentant man); these collected beauties contain within such moral greatness, something so solemn, and so affecting, that they are not to be surpassed even by the prayers of the chorister of Ilion. The Most High, in pitying condescension, grants the final salvation of man. Milton is skilful in early Scripture history, and also possesses a fine taste; in every portion of his poem there are traces of a God who, from the beginning of time, devoted himself to death, in order to redeem man from death. Adam's fall becomes more powerful and more tragical, when we understand that its consequences reach

even to the Son of God. Besides these more prominent beauties which belong to the conception of "Paradise Lost," there are a crowd of lesser beauties, which it would absorb too much time to rehearse in detail. Milton has powerful command of language. We feel the *visible darkness*, the *terrible silence*, &c. This confidence and boldness of imagery in leading or guiding them to salvation, like the discord in music, has a very brilliant effect. Genius has its deceptive appearances; but it is necessary carefully to discriminate, because, when she becomes affected, it is but an idle play of words, pernicious alike to language and to good taste. Let us observe, that, although the Eden hymn has imitated the songs of Virgil, it still maintains its originality even while appropriating to itself foreign riches; the original writer is not he who never imitates any one, but he whom no person *can imitate*.



PHYSICAL MAN.

IN order to perfect our view of final causes, or proofs of the existence of God, drawn from nature's wonders, nothing more remains for us but the examination of the human frame. Let us attend to those masters who have given this subject their profound attention. Cicero thus describes the constitution of man: "With regard to our senses by which the soul recognizes external objects, their structure answers admirably to their destination, and they are arranged in the head as in a fortified citadel. The eyes are like sentinels, occupying the most conspicuous station, where they can take an elevated survey of surrounding objects, and be a suitable protection. To the sense of hearing a prominent position is also assigned, to receive the sound, which naturally ascends. The nostrils have a claim to a like prominence, as they are indispensable to the mouth, in assisting the sense of taste, in detecting wholesome or deleterious food. The taste, which is to test the quality of what we eat, stands at the entrance of the reception passage for liquids and for solids. The sense of touch is delicately extended over the whole body, in order that no impression may be received, either of heat or cold, without

an instantaneous feeling. And as no accomplished architect will place a disagreeable object of sight or smell in the view of the building, so nature has skilfully removed all similar offences from the human frame. But is there any other artist than nature possessed of such admirable skill, and who has so artistically arranged our senses? She has protected the eyes with a fine transparent covering, that we may look through them, and with a compact texture, in order to retain them in position. They glide smoothly from side to side, at the beck of the will, and are secured against external injury. The pupil, which is formed to receive the rays of light, although so small, is a beautiful piece of mechanism, and momently contracts and dilates, to suit its important office. The eyelids close gently over them, with their soft and delicate substance: they are exquisitely contrived to open and shut, at pleasure, with ornamental fringes of hair to brush out troublesome motes, and to defend them when open, as well as to shade them beautifully when they are closed and useless in sleep. Again, our eyes have the advantage of prominences which protect them from above and below, by the eyebrows and the cheeks. The nose is placed between them as a separating wall. As for the ear, it is always open, because we have need of its service, even when wrapt in slumber. The slightest

sound is heard, and we are instantly awakened and on the alert. Its passages are complex rather than straight, to prevent anything sliding within them, to which they would otherwise be liable. But our incomparable hands, what a necessity are they to us, and how useful and accomplished in the arts! The fingers open and close without effort, so flexible are their joints; with their assistance, the hands use the pencil and the chisel; they play on the lyre, and on the lute: so much for the agreeable. As for the useful, they cultivate the soil, build houses, make clothes, and various utensils of metal and other substances. The imagination contrives, the senses examine, and the hand executes: so that, if we are lodged, clothed, and fed—if we have cities, homes, and temples, we are indebted to our wonderful hands. We cannot but be convinced that chance alone never could have formed the human mechanism, with such noble qualities, such admirable design, any more than this excellent discourse could have been composed by an illiterate writer, without eloquence or skill." Many authors have proved, and especially the physician Nieuwentyt, that the limits within which our senses operate are those best adapted for them, and that we should be exposed to numerous inconveniences and dangers, were those organs, to any considerable extent, enlarged. Galen, in the midst of an

anatomical analysis of a human body, overwhelmed with admiration, suddenly drops the scalpel, and exclaims: "Oh, Thou adorable Being who hast made us! I believe I am chanting a hymn to Thy glory, while engaged in so sacred a discourse! In unfolding the excellency of Thy works, I feel that I honor and exalt Thee more, than by offering up before Thee whole mountains of living sacrifice, or in perfuming Thy temples with the most precious incense. True piety consists in first learning to know myself, and afterwards instructing those around me in Thy true character, and Thy exalted goodness, and Thy power, and Thy wisdom. Thy benevolence is displayed in the equal distribution of Thy gifts, generously awarding to each man the organs necessary for him; Thy wisdom is seen in the excellence of Thy bounty; and Thy power is manifested in the execution of Thy designs."

A D A M A N D E V E .

SATAN has penetrated into the terrestrial paradise. In the midst of the animal creation,

“He saw
Two of far nobler aspect, erect and tall,
. of daughters, Eve.”* †

Our first parents had reclined themselves in the shade upon the banks of a fountain. There they were partaking their evening repast, in the midst of the animal creation, which were gambolling around their king and their queen. Satan, concealed under the form of one of these creatures, contemplates the happy pair, and feels himself almost softened at the touching spectacle of their beauty, their innocence, and by the prospective evil which shall overshadow this transient bliss. Admirable scene! Meanwhile Adam and Eve discourse lovingly together near the fountain, and Eve thus addresses her spouse:

“That day I oft remember, when from sleep
. her silver mantle threw.”†

* Par. Lost, Book 4th.

† Par. Lost, Book 4th, ver. 449–502, inclusive; then the 591st verse until the 609th.

Adam and Eve retired to their nuptial bower, after having offered up their prayer to the Eternal. They penetrated to the obscurity of the grove, and reclined upon its flowery bed. Then the poet, pausing before this opening arbor, sings a hymn to Hymen, with his eye gazing upon the polestar and the firmament sparkling with stars. He thus began this grand epithalamium, without premeditation, and as if by an inspired breath, after the olden style:

“Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring.”

“Healthful, conjugal love, mysterious law, originator of posterity!” It is thus that the Grecian army sang, immediately after the death of Hector: “*We have gained a glorious victory! We have killed the immortal Hector!*” In a like manner the Salii celebrated the festival of Hercules, impetuously exclaiming, in Virgil: “It is thou who hast enchain'd the two centaurs, sons of a river-god,” &c.

This hymeneal anthem gives the finishing touch to Milton's picture, and completes the painting of the loves of our primogenitors. We need not apprehend that we shall be reproached with the length of this quotation. “Voltaire remarks, that, in all other poems, love is regarded as a weakness. In Milton alone is it a virtue. The poet has been able to raise, with a chaste hand,

the veil which covers elsewhere the raptures of this passion. He transports the reader into this garden of delights. He seems to imbue him with the joy, the pure and impassioned ecstasy, with which Adam and Eve are filled.

“He does not elevate him above human nature, but only makes him superior to its excesses; as it is a *nonpareil* in *love*, so is it a unique in poetical compositions.” If we compare the loves of Ulysses and Penelope with those of Adam and Eve, we discover that the simplicity of Homer is more ingenious, that of Milton more magnificent. Ulysses, king and hero though he is, betrays some touches, nevertheless, of the rustic; a wild and artless manner characterizes his attitudes, his stratagems, and his words. Adam, though newly born and without experience, is already the perfect model of the man. We feel that he is not issued forth as the seed of the weak woman, but *he* is fashioned from the hands of the living God. He is noble, majestic, and at the same time full of innocence and genius. He is such as the Scriptures describe as one worthy of being respected by the angels, and of walking in solitude with his Creator. As to the consorts—if Penelope is more reserved, and afterwards more tender, than our first mother, it is because she has been disciplined by trial, and sorrow has rendered her distrustful and sensitive. Eve, on the

contrary, joyously abandons herself. She is communicative and bewitching; she is slightly touched with coquetry. And why should she be as serious and prudent in her manners as Penelope? Does not the whole world lie at her feet, and beckon her smilingly onward? If grief contracts the soul, happiness most certainly enlarges it. In the first example, there is no solitude deep enough to hide her sorrows; in the second, there are not hearts enough to rehearse her pleasures.

However, Milton did not design to paint a perfect character in his Eve; he has represented her as irresistibly charming, but as rather indiscreet and lavish of her words, in order, in some measure, to anticipate the mischief into which she will be plunged by this fault. As for the rest, the loves of Ulysses and Penelope are chaste and dignified, as it ever should be between wedded souls.

We would remark here, that, in luxurious paintings, the ancient poets betray at the same time a simplicity and a chastity which is astonishing. They are most independent in their ideas, and no less free in their expression; we, on the contrary, bewilder the judgment with our extreme caution in managing the eyes and the ears. Whence originates this magic of the ancients, and why is it that a nude Venus of Praxiteles is no less charming to our minds than to our senses? It is

that the ideal is beautiful, and impresses the soul, rather than the senses. Thus it is that the genius and intellect alone become enamored, and not the passions ; it is this passionate taste which can alone lose itself in the master-piece, or beau-ideal. Every terrestrial emotion is extinguished, and is replaced by a divine tenderness ; the consuming soul winds itself round the admired object, and spiritualizes even the more sensual terms it is compelled to employ in the expression of its passion. But neither the love of Penelope and Ulysses, nor that of Dido for Eneas, nor that of Alceste for Admetus, can be compared, in point of sentiment, to Milton's two nobler personages, in the sacred feeling which characterizes *their affection*. True religion can alone halo the character with a tenderness as holy as it is sublime.

In order to make his picture more complete, Milton has, by a fine touch of his genius, hidden the Spirit of Darkness beneath the spreading branches of a noble tree. The rebellious angel spies out the beauteous pair ; from their own lips, he learns their fatal secret ; he rejoices within himself at their predicted downfall ; and the whole description of the felicity of our first parents is truly but the first step towards frightful calamities.

Penelope and Ulysses recall a past misfortune. Eve and Adam anticipate unknown future miseries. All dramatic scenes fail of their effect, which

presume to present a play, without a due commingling of joy with sorrow, either developed, or a foreshadowing of coming doom in its representation. Perfect happiness wearies us ; absolute unmitigated evil repulses us. The first is shriven of remembrances and tears ; the second, of smiling happiness and alluring hope. If you ascend from sorrow to joy, as in Homer's scenes, you will be more touchingly moved, or more gently melancholy ; because the soul will remember the past, but as a dream of the night, and will sweetly repose itself in the enjoyment of the present : if, on the contrary, you descend from a condition of prosperous joy to tears and woe, as in Milton's pictures, you will be more deeply grieved, and more profoundly affected, because the heart is more suddenly and painfully aroused from its clustering delights with the foreshadowing evils which threaten it.

Therefore we must, in every life-picture, unite happiness and misfortune together, and make the evil counterbalance the good, in order to be in true accordance with nature.

In the cup of human life are commingled two ingredients—the one sweet, the other bitter ; but, deeper than the bitterness of the second, there yet remain the *lees*, which they both equally deposit at the bottom of the vase.

MARRIAGE.

EUROPE is indebted to the Church for the small number of good laws which she possesses. The wisest of our emperors and of our kings, such as Charlemagne, and Alfred the Great, believed they could not do better than to adopt into their civil code the ecclesiastical law, drawn from the Levitical, the Evangelical, and the Roman jurisprudence. How glorious is Christianity! how impressive, how majestic!

Jesus Christ has conferred a new dignity upon the holy estate of marriage, by making it the sacred and mysterious emblem of his union with the Church. Can the sacrament of marriage be too highly extolled, when we reflect that our whole social economy is based upon it? How shall we sufficiently admire the wisdom of Him who has distinguished it with His own signature and presence. The Church has ever carefully guarded this important institution. She has determined the degrees of consanguinity in which the union will be lawful. The spirit which has regulated this interdiction is worthy of the purity of our religion, as it is founded no less upon physical than upon moral reasons. . . . The custom of betrothing has been observed by the Church from

remote antiquity ; and Aulus Gellius informs us it was established among the people of Latium ; and the Romans and the Grecians adopted it ; and in Gospel times we are reminded of the betrothment of Joseph and Mary. The intention of this custom is to give opportunity to the bride and bridegroom to become fully acquainted with each other, before they unite together in indissoluble bonds. In rural villages, the ceremony of betrothing is occasionally observed with all its pristine beauty. Upon a glorious autumnal morn, you may see a young peasant, seeking his bride-elect at her parental homestead. Musicians accompany him (recalling the days of ancient minstrelsy), playing some rustic sonnet, or romantic air of the days of chivalry, or pilgrim chants. Past ages seem to revive from their gothic tombs, and invest these young people with their ancient manners and remembrances. The village priest pronounces a blessing upon the bride, who deposits upon the altar a distaff adorned with flowers. The company return again to the farm-house with the lord and lady of the manor, and the priest, and the judge of the hamlet, to partake of an entertainment with the young couple, and their neighbors and friends. The feast terminates with a dance upon an adjoining barn floor, and the young lady from the manor honors the bridegroom with her hand in the dance, to the music of the bagpipe, whilst the spectators

are seated upon the fresh-gathered sheaves, recalling the times of Jethro's daughters, the reapers of Boaz, and the betrothment of Jacob and Rachel. The publishing of the bans followed the betrothing. This excellent custom is designed to prevent clandestine marriages, and also to ascertain if there are any impediments, among the contracting parties, which ought to be considered. But behold the majestic advance of the Christian marriage ! Her step is dignified, her mien elevated, serious, sublime ! A new career opens before man ; he is admonished that he has just completed the most momentous act of his life. The nuptial blessing (pronounced by God himself over the first pair), in impressing the husband with a profound respect, tells him that, like Adam, he is about to become the head of a family, and that he now assumes all the responsibility of this state of humanity. The female is equally well instructed. Her prospective happiness is veiled by the image of her new duties. A voice seems to address her from the sacred altar : " Oh, woman ! hast thou well considered the vow thou hast made ? Dost thou know, that henceforth there is no liberty for thee but the tomb ? Knowest thou that, within thy mortality, thou hast the seed of the immortal, which is to be fashioned after the likeness of God ? " Marriage, among the ancients, was a scene full of irreverent joy, and unaccompanied

with serious gravity or decorum. Christianity alone has invested this institution with honor and dignity. Wiser than philosophers, she has well ordained that man should have but one wife, and that he should cleave to her until death. If the passions of men have revolted against this law; if they have not perceived the disorder which divorce brings into families, in disturbing the order of succession, unnaturalizing the parental affections, and in corrupting the heart, in turning marriage into a merely civil institution, we cannot hope to produce any effect by what we have said upon this point. Without entering very deeply into the matter, we shall remark that if, by granting divorces, we expect to make married life happier (which is the grand argument of the day), we are under a fatal delusion. He who has failed in making the happiness of one wife, and whose affection is not founded upon the lasting bond of esteem; who cannot confine himself to the family yoke; he who proves restless under the first nuptial-tie, will never be able to make the second wife happy—it is a vain and deceitful expectation. For himself, he will gain nothing by his mutability: what he calls unsuitability of disposition in his companion, proceeds alone from his own capricious temper, and unreasonable exactions. Long-continued friendship and habit are more necessary to happiness, and even to love, than is often ima-

gined. We only *rest* upon the objects of our affection when we have passed many of our days with them — when we have suffered and rejoiced together. We should know each other soul-deep ; the mysterious veil which concealed the two spouses in the primitive Church must be removed in all its foldings from each other, whilst it still remains impenetrable to the rest of the world. What, shall it be, upon the slightest caprice, that I must fear the loss of my wife and children, and that I must be deprived of them in my old age ? And do they tell me that I shall become a better husband under this apprehension ? No ! we do not prize an uncertain good ; we love to confide in our blessings, and to secure permanent possession. Let us not give to hymen the wings of love ; let us not make a flying phantom out of a sacred reality. One thought will forever drive away your happiness in your momentary ties ; remorse would pursue you ; unconsciously you would compare one wife with the other — the one you have deserted with the one you have found ; and, do not deceive yourself, the heart is too often in league with bygone objects and pleasures. This distraction of mind would blight all your pleasures and joys. In caressing your new child, you would be reminded of the one you have neglected ; you would have heart-reproaches in the very embraces of affection. In man there is a tendency to unity ; if he dissipates

his affections, he loses peace of mind ; like God, whose image he bears, his soul seeks continually the concentration of past, present, and future, into one grand whole. The Christian wife is no mere mortal ; she is an extraordinary being, mysterious, angelical ; she is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone—"they twain are one flesh." Man, in uniting himself with her, has but rejoined his own substance ; his soul, as well as his body, are incomplete without her : he has strength, she has beauty ; he fights for his country, and labors in the field, but he knows nothing about domestic duties ; a wife is necessary to him, to prepare his food, and to make his home comfortable and happy. If he has a grief, his companion has an ever ready sympathy and consolation ; is he weary with daily toils, his cherished wife cheers him with her smiles, and in her heart-welcome and presence he is refreshed and encouraged. Without her he would become rude, unpolished, and solitary. Woman flings around man the flowers of life, like the circling vines of the forest, which decorate the oak trunks with their perfumed garlands. Finally, the Christian husband and wife live, flourish, and die together ; together they educate their children ; together they return to dust ; and together will they arise from the tomb, upon the resurrection morn.

THE FATHER—PRIAM.

GLANCING from the conjugal character, we pass onward to the paternal relation: we will look at the father in the two most touching and sublime aspects of human life — old age united with misfortune. Priam—this fallen monarch once so glorious, and from whom the grandees of earth had again and again sought favors, and at whose nod they trembled; Priam, alas! thou art fallen! The hair sprinkled with ashes, the cheeks bedewed with tears, alone and at the midnight hour has penetrated to the Grecian camp. Humbled and kneeling before the merciless Achilles, kissing his terrible hands — those destructive hands which were so often stained with the blood of his sons—it is from them he would redeem the body of his son Hector. “Remember your own father, oh! godlike Achilles! he is, like myself, bending under the weight of years, and he is, with me, trembling upon the verge of the grave. Perhaps even at this moment he is overwhelmed by powerful neighbors, without having any one near to defend him. And yet, when he hears that you live, his heart will rejoice; every day he will watch to welcome the return of his son from Troy. Woe is me, most unfortunate parent that I am; from

among my numerous sons sent to the great battle of Ilion, but *one is left to me*. I counted them by fifties, when the Greeks descended upon these shores; nine issued from one family, and the remainder were brought to me through different captives. The greater number became victims of cruel Mars. There is one alone, who, by the might of his brave arm, defended his brothers and Troy. Him you have also killed fighting for his country. Hector: it is for him that I approach the Grecian fleet; I come to redeem his body, and I bring you an immense ransom. Respect the gods, oh, Achilles! Take pity upon me; recollect your *own* father! Oh! how unhappy I am! No unfortunate has ever been reduced to such an extreme wretchedness! I kiss the hands which have killed my son!"

What a beautiful prayer! What a striking scene is presented to the reader! Night—the tent of Achilles; this hero weeping with the faithful Automedon over Patroclus; Priam suddenly emerges from the dusky shadows, and impulsively precipitates himself at the feet of the son of Peleus! Beyond, in the darkness, wait the chariots, which are laden with the presents of the Trojan sovereign; while at some distance, upon the banks of the Hellespont, are the mutilated remains, abandoned without honor, of the generous Hector. If you study the discourse of

Priam, you will observe that the second word uttered by the miserable monarch is that of *father*, and the second thought presented in the same verse is a eulogy upon the proud Achilles—Achilles comparable unto the gods. Priam has obtained a great victory over his own feelings, thus to address the murderer of Hector; herein he has shown a deep acquaintance with the human heart. The most touching remembrance that could be brought to the son of Peleus, after being reminded of his own father, was undoubtedly the *age* of this venerated parent. Until this period, Priam has not dared to speak a word with regard to himself; but, as this opportunity presents itself, he impulsively seizes it with affecting simplicity: like myself, he says, he trembles upon the verge of the tomb. Thus Priam only alludes to himself in union with Peleus: he compels Achilles to behold only his own parent in the person of a suppliant and unhappy king. The image which is presented of the helpless and forsaken old monarch, *perhaps overcome by powerful neighbors* during the absence of his son; the description of his sorrows changed to joyfulness, upon learning that this son is still rejoicing in life and health: this comparison of the possible griefs of Peleus with the irreparable ills of Priam, is a well-managed address of heart-crushing sorrow with propriety and dignity. With what venerable and holy skilfulness does the old

man of Ilion imperceptibly lead the splendid Achilles to hearken patiently to a eulogium even upon Hector ! He at first carefully refrains from naming the Trojan hero ; he only says, *there yet remained one* ; and he names not Hector to his conqueror, but after having told him that he *had killed him while fighting for his country* ; he then adds the simple word, Hector ! Thus the son of Peleus is satiated with vengeance ere his enemy is recalled to him. If Priam had at first named Hector, Achilles had thought of Patroclus ; but it is no longer Hector that is presented to him, but a disfigured body ; these are but the wretched remains that had been outcast to the dogs and the vultures ; still less would they show them to him now but with this apology : *he was fighting for his country*. The haughty Achilles is satisfied with having triumphed over a hero, who had stood alone as the defender of his brethren and the walls of Troy. In concluding, Priam, after speaking of men to the son of Thetis, reminds him of the justice of the gods ; and he finally leads him back again to the recollection of Peleus. The concluding passage of the prayer of the monarch of Ilion is of the highest order of pathetic sublimity.

THE MOTHER—ANDROMACHE.

THERE is a voice heard in Rama, says Jeremiah (the prophet), weeping and lamentation, “Rachel weeping for her children, and will not be comforted, because they are not.” This voice prolongs her echo over the mountains of time, with tears and many groans. “Rachel is still mourning her sons, and will not be consoled, because *they are not*.” How beautifully mournful is this, “because *they are not!*” A religion which has so delicately consecrated a single word, has penetrated the depths of the maternal heart. The veneration of the Virgin-mother, and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ for children, is a sufficient proof that the spirit of Christianity has a tender sympathy with the genius of mothers. For the critic, we herein design to open a new idea, which we shall discover in the description of a *heathen mother*, as given by a modern author, viz., that this author, unconsciously to himself, has drawn his picture with the *Christian features*. In order to prove the moral or religious influence which an institution exercises over the heart of man, it is not needful that the related example should be drawn from the foundation of this institution; it suffices that the description should be permeated

by its spirit or genius: thus it happens, that the elysium of Telemachus is really a Christian's paradise. In like manner, in the Andromache of Racine, its principal sentiments, and the most impressive, are the emanations of a *Christian* poet. In the Andromache of the Iliad, it is rather the *wife* than the *mother*; that of Euripides portrays a character at once violent and ambitious, which detracts from the maternal character; that of Virgil is tender and sad, but it is still less the mother than the wife; the widow of Hector says not: “Where is Astyanax?” but “Where is Hector?”

The Andromache of Racine is more sensitive, more interesting, than the ancient Andromache. This verse, so artless and so lovely: “To-day I have not yet embraced him,” is the language of a Christian woman. This custom found no sympathy with the Greeks, and the Romans had still less of this outgushing heartiness. Homer’s Andromache laments over the anticipated misfortunes of Astyanax, while, for the present, she concerns herself very little about him. The mother in our religion, without having less prescience, is more gentle and loving; and oftentimes, while pressing her child to her heart, obliterates her own griefs. The ancients, it must be acknowledged, gave but a cursory glance over *childhood*; the cradle language appeared weak and trifling to

them, and had no charms for their ears. It was the God of the Bible who *alone* stood up fearless and undaunted on the side of “little children,” and who placed them before men as their examples. Matt. 18 : 3. Mark 9 : 35, 36. “And taking a little child, Jesus sat him in the midst of them, saying, Whosoever shall receive in my name a little child, receiveth me. Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Now, these precepts are entirely contrary to the pride of human nature ; we herein see human nature elevated, refined—human nature evangelized. This humility which Christianity has shed over these natural sentiments, has changed for us the relations of the passions ; and she has, so to speak, thereby, with her piercing wand, shivered to atoms the false standard of the modern Andromache. When, in the Iliad, the widow of Hector describes the destiny which awaits her son, the picture which she draws of the future misfortunes of Astyanax, has in it something mean and base. The humility of our religion is far from employing similar language ; her expressions are as noble as they are touching. The Christian subjects himself voluntarily to the severest conditions of this present existence ; but we are conscious that he is governed by the highest moral principles ; that he humbles himself, but only to his God, and not to

men ; and, while even passing through the fire, he loses not his dignity. Faithful to his Master, without cowardice, he despises the chains which he bears but for a moment, and from which he will soon be relieved by death. He regards the fleeting shadows of this life but as a dream, a passing night-vision — endures its changes without complaint or murmur, because liberty and oppression, prosperity and misfortune, the crown and the slave-cap, are all alike to his spiritual vision. He looks not alone on the things seen, but at the unseen ; for “the things which are seen are but for a moment, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

THE SON—GUSMAN.

VOLTAIRE has furnished us with another Christian character in the *Son*. He is neither the docile Telemachus with Ulysses, nor the haughty Achilles with Peleus ; but he is a young man full of fire and enthusiasm, whose passions are brought into subjection to religious principles, and whose inclinations are tempered by gentleness and forbearance. Alzire, notwithstanding the unnaturalness of the characters, is a very attractive play : we see drawn, as upon a chart, the Christian morality which elevates it above the vulgar code ;

and it is, in itself, a divine poetry. The peace which reigns in the soul of Alvarez is not alone the peace of nature. Let us suppose that Nestor would seek to moderate the passions of Antilochus: at first, he would relate examples in the history of children who have been ruined because they turned a deaf ear to parental advice; then, giving some general maxims upon the inexperience of youth and the wisdom of age, he would crown his remonstrances with a eulogy upon himself, and a sigh after the days of olden time. The influence which Alvarez employs is of an altogether different kind; he casts into forgetfulness his hoary locks and his paternal authority, and speaks only in the name of religion. His endeavor is not to deter Gusman from any private or aggravated crime; he counsels him in an enlarged charity, and in every virtue—a celestial humanity, as it were, brought down from heaven by the *God-man*, and which never had an abiding-place upon this earth before the establishment of Christianity. Indeed, Alvarez commanding his son as a *father*, and requiring his obedience as a *subject*, is a most beautiful lesson in morals, and as far superior to the morality of the ancients as the Evangelist surpasses the dialogues of Plato in the instruction of the virtues. Achilles wounds his enemy, and insults him after having conquered him. Gusman is as proud as the son of Peleus; pierc'd with

blows from the hands of Zamor, expiring in the flower of his age, losing at the same time an adored wife and the command of a vast empire, behold and listen to the sentence which he pronounces over his rival and his murderer, brilliant triumph of religion, and of paternal example, over a *Christian Son*.

Gusman to Zamor :

“ Now learn the difference with thy faith and mine :
Thine bids thee lift thy dagger to my throat —
Mine can forgive the wrong, and bid thee live.”

And to what religion belongs this high morality and this death ? It reigns here as a splendid fact, or *beautiful truth*, superior to all poetical ideality. When a truthful ideal is presented to us, it is no exaggeration ; it is recognised instantly by all good and great minds. Voltaire is very ungrateful, to have calumniated a worship which has furnished him (as an author) with his best title to immortality. This verse which he has written should have recalled him to himself : it originated, undoubtedly, in an involuntary inspiration of approval and of admiration.

What then ! true Christians inherit all the virtues !
They are born to command.

And let us add, that the best things of genius fall also to their portion.

THE DAUGHTER—IPHIGENIA.

IPHIGENIA and Zara present an interesting contrast in the *daughter*. Both yield themselves to paternal authority, and devote themselves to the religion of their country. Agamemnon, it is true, requires of Iphigenia the double sacrifice of her love and of her life, and Lusignan only asks of Zara to forget her love; but for a passionate woman to live and renounce the object of her devotion is, perhaps, a more grievous and painful condition than death itself. As to their natural interest, the two situations might be the same; let us see whether the religious interest is equally balanced. Agamemnon, in obedience to the gods, does nothing, after all, but sacrifice his child to his ambition.

Why should the young Grecian devote herself to Neptune? Is he not a tyrant whom she ought to detest? The spectator takes part with Iphigenia even against heaven. The pity and terror which is felt, depend solely upon situation, and upon spontaneous sympathy; and even if the religious character of the piece is changed, it is quite evident that the dramatic effect would remain the same. But in Zara, if you take away the pious motive, the whole effect of the piece will be de-

stroyed. Does Jesus Christ require this bloody sacrifice? Does He command this renunciation of affection? Ah! is it possible there can be a doubt upon this point? Was it not to redeem even Zara, that he was nailed to a shameful cross; that he endured the insults, contempt, and injustice of mankind? Did He not drink the cup of bitterness to the dregs? And will Zara give her heart and hand to those who have persecuted this merciful God! to those who sacrifice Christians every day of their lives! to those who hold in irons this successor of Bouillon, this defender of the faith, this father of Zara! Truly the religious sentiment is not out of place here; and whoever would suppress it, would annihilate the piece. As to the remainder, it appears to us that Zara, as a tragedy, is still more interesting than Iphigenia, for this reason, because it is yet to be developed. And this will oblige us to ascend to the first principles of composition as an art. It is a matter of fact, that these examples, placed before the humbler classes for imitation, ought to be taken from the highest rank in society. This remark holds to a manifest agreement, that the fine arts in unison with the human heart know how to develop. The representation of misfortunes, which we have ourselves experienced, would afflict us, without our being suitably instructed or improved thereby. There is no necessity of our frequenting public

spectacles, in order *there* to learn the secrets of our own firesides ; fiction will not please us, when the sad reality exists beneath our own roof. Besides, it is improbable that any moral lesson will be received from a mere resemblance ; rather, on the contrary, we shall be apt to despond with the picture of our own condition, or to become envious of a position elevated above our own. The multitude are interested by theatricals, but they do not care to look in upon a thatched cottage, as if there they should behold a representation of their own indigence ; they demand of you the great, clothed in purple ; the ear would hear noble names, and pompous titles, and the eye would be riveted upon the misfortunes of kings and princes. Morality, curiosity, the nobleness of art and purity of taste, and perhaps the envious nature of man, require that the characters in tragedy should be elevated above the masses. But if the personage be distinguished, his sorrow ought to be common to all, and felt by them. Indeed, it is in this aspect that Zara appears to us more touching than Iphigenia. That the daughter of Agamemnon dies, in order that a fleet may set sail, is a motive scarcely appreciable by the multitude. But with Zara we forget to reason, as every one can feel the conflict between passion and duty. Hence, take this as a dramatic rule : that it is necessary, as much as possible, to ground

the tragical interest, not upon an object, so much as upon a *sentiment*; and that the personages ought to be removed from the spectator by their rank, but draw near to them by their misfortunes. We should, however, seek, in the subject of Iphigenia as portrayed by Racine, the faint outlines of the Christian character; but the reader can draw these reflections for himself, as they follow naturally; and we shall close these observations with one more remark. Father Brumoy has remarked, that Euripides, in giving Iphigenia a dread of death, and a desire to escape, has written more in harmony with nature than Racine, whose Iphigenia seems to be too much resigned. This reflection is good in itself; but, what Father Brumoy did not perceive is, that the modern Iphigenia is the *Christian daughter*. Her father, and Heaven have spoken, and there is no alternative but obedience. Racine has not given to his heroine this moral courage, but in sympathy with the unconscious influence of a religious institution, which has entirely remodelled our moral code. Here Christianity transcends nature, and is consequently more in harmony with beautiful poetry, which encourages to a slightly exaggerated picture, and ever adorns and ennobles its subject. The daughter of Agamemnon conquering her affection and love of life, shows off to greater advantage than Iphigenia mourning her sins. It is

not always that purely natural things will most affect us. It is natural to fear death; and yet a victim who grieves for herself, dries up the tears we should shed over her. The human heart is ambitious in its aspirations: it would be an object of admiration; it contains within itself an enthusiasm for an unknown beauty or good for which it was originally destined. The Christian religion is so beautifully arranged, that it is a species of poetry in itself, since it develops the *beau-ideal* of character: herein the martyrs are discovered by our painters, and the cavaliers of chivalry by our poets, &c. Christianity is equally vigorous in her descriptions of vice as of virtue, since it is true that crimes are increased in proportion to the number of laws which the guilty can break. How striking that passage in St. Paul: “When the *law came sin revived.*”

Thus the muses, who overlook the medium classes in society, should seek the more perfectly to accommodate themselves to a religion who ever places her examples either above or below man. In order to complete more perfectly the circle of natural characters, we ought to mention fraternal affection; but what has been said concerning the son and the daughter, will apply equally to brothers, or to brothers and sisters. To conclude: the Holy Scriptures contain the account of Cain and Abel, the earliest and the greatest tragedy

which the world has seen. Elsewhere we shall speak of Joseph and his brethren.

In a word, Christianity leaves natural character as it has ever been represented by the ancients ; but she goes beyond them, as she imbues it with all her softening influences. It necessarily augments the power of the drama, as the resources are increased ; and as the subject-material upon which she can operate are multiplied, so are her beauties augmented.

VIRTUES AND MORAL LAWS.

THE larger number of the ancient philosophers have made a *division* of the vices and the virtues ; but religion, in her wisdom, goes beyond that of men. Let us consider, at first, *pride*, which the Church pronounces to be the first and the deadliest of all vices. It is the sin of Satan—it is the primeval sin of the *world*. Pride is so insidiously the principle of evil, that it *mingles* itself among the different infirmities of the soul ; it burns in the smile of envy, it shines in the elegant wit of the voluptuary, it counts the gold of avarice, it sparkles in the eyes of passion, and in its train follow the elegancies of effeminacy.

It was pride which caused Adam's apostasy ; it

was pride which armed Cain with the fratricidal club; it was pride which *built* Babel, and *overturned* Babylon. Through pride, Athens perished with Græcia; pride broke the throne of Cyrus, divided the empire of Alexander, and finally crushed Rome under the weight of the world.

In the private circumstances of life, the effects of pride have been still more fatal. It makes its attempts even upon God. In looking into the causes of atheism, we are led to this sad conclusion, that the principal motive of those who rebel against heaven, and have complained of something in *society*, or in *nature* (always excepting young people seduced by the world, or writers, who *only make a noise*), is pride. But, wherefore do not those who are so easily fascinated by the caprices of mere chance, and its frivolous advantages—why do they not know, or seek to find the *remedy* of slight misfortunes, or evils, by themselves drawing nearer to the Divinity? This is the true foundation of goodness. God is so essentially the supreme good, and the beauty of excellence, that his name alone, pronounced with love, is sufficient to impart something divine to a man the least favored by nature, as has been remarked concerning Socrates. Let us leave atheism to those who have not enough nobleness to raise themselves above the misfortunes of life, but evince, in their blasphemies, that

man's first vice has still but too perceptible a lodgment within him. If the Church has given to pride the first rank in the scale of human degradations, she has not less skilfully classed the other six capital vices. It must not be acknowledged that the order in which we see them classed is arbitrary; it is sufficient to examine them, to perceive that religion passes naturally from crimes which attack society in general to those delinquencies, or offences, which rest but upon the guilty. Thus, for example, envy, luxury, avarice, and anger, follow immediately from pride; because these are vices which exercise themselves upon a foreign subject, and which only exist among men; whilst gluttony, and indolence, which come from the latter, are selfish and shameful inclinations, forced to derive from themselves their chief pleasures or delights. The virtues preferred by Christianity, and the rank which she assigns to them, are equally true to nature. Before Jesus Christ, the soul of man was a chaos; the Word spake, and immediately all was illumined in the intellectual sphere, as the *same word* had of old arranged the physical world; this was the moral creation of the universe. The virtues arose up as pure fire in the heavens; some of them, as sparkling suns, attracted all eyes by their brilliant light; while others, as modest stars, sought the security of the

shade, where, nevertheless, they could not conceal themselves. From that time we see an admirable balance established between strength and weakness ; religion directs her thuuders against pride, a vice which sustains itself as a virtue ; she discovers it in the folds of our hearts, she follows it in its metamorphoses ; the sacraments are arrayed against it in a holy antagonism, and humility, clothed with sackcloth, the eyes cast down and streaming with tears, becomes one of the first virtues of the faithful.

OUR SAVIOUR.

JESUS Christ appeared in the midst of men full of grace and truth. His words were convincing by their authority and mildness. He came as a “man of sorrows,” and all His consolations were for the unfortunate. His miracles, says Bossuet, *display even more of goodness than of power*. His usual mode of instruction was by dialogue, or parable, which were *adapted* to the minds of the people. He teaches by the wayside ; and as He walks through the meadows, He directs the attention of His disciples to the humble daisy-flower, and to the lilies, and exhorts them to trust in Providence, which supports the feeblest plant, and

feeds the smallest of birds ; and in looking upon the fruits of the earth, He teaches them to judge a man by his works ; “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit ; therefore by their fruit ye shall know them.” Kindly regarding smiling infancy, He recommends innocence and humility ; and, finding Himself among a flock of sheep, He calls Himself the “Good Shepherd,” carrying the lambs in His bosom. Seated upon a mountain top in spring-time, while at His feet eager crowds were gathering, He draws instruction from the natural objects by which they are surrounded. From the spectacle of this collection of poor and unhappy people, He pictures the beatitudes ; “Blessed are they who mourn ; Blessed are they who hunger and thirst,” &c.

Those who obey these commands, and they who neglect them, are compared to two men who build houses — the one upon a rock, and the other upon moving sand : according to some interpreters he shows, in this discourse, a flourishing hamlet, built upon a hill, and at its base cottages destroyed by an inundation. When, of the Samaritan woman, Jesus asks for a drink of water, He opens His doctrine to her under the beautiful image of a spring of living water.

The most violent enemies of the Saviour have not dared to bring a reproach against His charac-

ter. Celsus, Julian, Volusian, have acknowledged His miraculous power ; and Porphyry relates that even the heathen oracles reverenced Him for His illustrious piety. Tiberius wished to place Him in the rank of their gods ; according to Lampridius, Adrian had dedicated several temples in his honor, and Alexander Severus worshipped Him with the images of holy souls between Orpheus and Abraham. Pliny has rendered an illustrious testimony to the purity and simplicity of the primitive Christians, who imitated closely the example of their Redeemer and Lord. Against every philosophic system of antiquity, they have brought the reproach of certain vices ; even the patriarchs had their weaknesses ; the Lord Jesus Christ is alone without a blemish ; He is the image of the invisible Father who dwells among heavenly places. Pure and holy as the Son of God, tabernacling in the flesh, the love of God and man inspired His soul ; infinitely superior to the vain glory of the world, He perseveres, through suffering, to achieve His grand object, in man's recovery and salvation ; constraining all, by the power of His virtues, to believe His doctrine, and to imitate the perfection of His character. He was amiable and accessible ; His charity was unlimited : the Apostle gives us an idea in *two words*—He went about *doing good*. His resignation to the will of God distinguished Him every moment of His career ;

He was affectionate, and reciprocated friendship ; Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead, was His friend, and He hallowed, as it were, this noblest sentiment of the heart, by the performance of this greatest of His miracles. He was also a model of patriotism : “Jerusalem ! Jerusalem !” he cried, in uttering the judgment upon this guilty city, “How often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathers her brood under her wing, but thou wouldest not !” From the hill-top, as He cast His eyes over this condemned city, given up to a horrible destruction for her crimes ; He could not restrain His tears ; He saw the city, says the Apostle, and “He wept over it.” Nor was His patience less remarkable, when His disciples entreated Him to command fire from heaven on the Samaritan city, where hospitality was refused to Him : He turned upon them with indignation, and replied : “*ye know not what ye ask.*” If the Son of man had descended from heaven with all His power, it would not have been so noble a display of the virtues, to endure these evils ; but in this lies the glorious mystery : the Messiah came as a man of sorrows ; His heart was acquainted with grief, like His brethren ; hardened unbelief, and insensibility of soul, were the sole conditions which drew down His severe displeasure. He continually repeated : “*Love one another ; Father,*” He exclaimed upon the cross, “*forgive*

them, for they know not what they do.' He parted from His much-loved disciples in sadness ; He suffered the pangs of death, and the agonies of the crucifixion ; His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down upon the ground ; He feared that His Father had forsaken Him. When the angel presented to Him the bitter cup, he said : "Oh ! my Father ! if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, *not my will, but Thine be done.*" At this time, also, these words escaped His lips, breathing the sublimity of grief : "*My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.*" Ah ! if the purest morality, and the most tender heart—if a life spent in removing the errors, and relieving the sufferings of mankind, are attributes of the Divinity, who can deny that Jesus Christ is God ? Model of every virtue, friendship could rest in His bosom—or observe the beautiful confidence with which Jesus entrusts His mother to the beloved disciple as His dying legacy. His compassion is upon all the unfortunate, in relieving their wants, and wiping away their tears : mark what admirable charity, in His judgment upon the adulterous woman. How touching is His love for children ! what kindness and candor ! The firmness of His soul illuminates the darkness of the crucifixion, and His last breath is a sigh of pity.

THE PASSIONS.

CHRISTIANITY has changed the relations of the passions, *in changing the foundations of vice and virtue.*

From our examination of natural *characters*, we come to consider the *passions*. We know that it is almost impossible to speak of the first without embracing the second ; but our design now is to enlarge upon the last.

If a religion was known, whose primary object was to put a curb upon the passions of men, such a religion would invariably increase the play of the passions in the drama of that epoch ; she would be more favorable to the description of the sentiments than any religious institution which, not recognising these heart-pleasures, could only be acted upon by external objects. For in this is the superiority of our worship over that of antiquity ; the Christian religion is a celestial breeze, which swells the sails of virtue, and multiplies the stormy conflicts of conscience around vice. The foundations of morality have been changed among men, at least among Christians, ever since the preaching of the Gospel. For example, among the ancients it was accounted noble to be of a haughty spirit, and humility was de-

spised as a mean baseness : among Christians, on the contrary, pride ranks as the greatest of vices, and humility leads in the class of the virtues. This transformation alone places nature in a new light ; and it will be our object to discover, in the passions, an agreement or harmony which was obscured to those of earlier times. *Charity* is the root of all *good* ; while vanity is at the source of all that is evil in our nature ; so that vicious passions are always founded on pride, while love enters into the composition of virtuous emotions. You will recognise the justness of this principle, in its application. For instance, why is it that *courage* has been elevated into greater honor among the moderns, than among the ancients ? How is it that a brutal instinct has been transformed into a virtue, and valor enlarged in its proportions among us ?

It is by the blending of *humility*, the Christian virtue, with this instinct so naturally contrary to it. From this union has arisen *magnanimity*, or a *poetical generosity* —a kind of passion (which chivalry has extended) quite unknown among the ancients. One of our most cherished sentiments, and perhaps the only one which the soul can claim (all others are more or less selfish in their nature, or their end), is friendship. And how beautifully has Christianity elevated this pure affection, by laying as its foundation-stone *charity*?

Jesus Christ reposed upon the bosom of John; and, when upon the cross, friendship's dying lips breathed forth those memorable words, worthy of a God: "Mother, behold thy Son: Son, behold thy mother." Christianity, which has revealed to us our double nature, and shown to us the contradictions of our being, and has penetrated to the height and depth of our heart, is, like ourselves, full of contrasts, since it presents to us a Man-God, an Infant of days the master of worlds, the creator of the universe issuing from the weakness of a creature — Christianity, let us tell you, in all these striking changes, is yet pre-eminently devoted to friendship. This sentiment is as much strengthened by opposition of qualities as by resemblances. In order that perfect friendship should exist between two persons, they should have equal powers of attraction, and of repulsion or opposition: their genius should be of the same strength, but different in kind; contrary opinions, but similarity of principles; separated by their prejudices (or likes and dislikes), but united by the same generous sensibilities; variable humors, and yet similar tastes: in a word, striking contrasts of character, and yet noble harmonies of soul. This ardor which *charity* sheds over the virtuous passions, gives to them a divine character. In ancient times eternity of sentiment was unknown, and passions were wrecked

fatally in the tomb. Friends, brothers, and relations parted from each other at death, and felt that theirs was an eternal separation ; to the Greeks, and also to the Romans, the crowning happiness was that the ashes of loved ones might commingle at death ; but how mournful it is, when all must be closed up in an urn of *sweet* and tender memories ! polytheism had made man a fixture in the past ; Christianity has opened before him a future full of hope.

The enjoyment of right sentiments upon earth is but a foreshadowing of the joys which await us hereafter. The principle of affection is not limited to this world ; two beings who truly love each other here below, are walking in the heavenly pathway, where they will meet again, if guided by virtue ; so that this forcible expression of the poet—*breathe out thy soul into that of thy loved one*—is literally true of two Christians. In being disrobed of their body, they only remove an obstacle to their more spiritual union, and their souls will enjoy perfect communion in the bosom of the Eternal. Let us not believe, however, that, in revealing to us the springs from which our passions flow, Christianity has disenchanted life. Far from betraying the imagination, in examining everything, she has spread clouds and shadows over things unprofitable to our final estate ; and is superior, in this respect,

to that daring philosophy which tries to penetrate the nature of man, and to fathom all things. We must not too deeply probe the recesses of the heart; the truths which dwell there are among the number of those which require twilight and perspective. It is a folly to be incessantly reasoning among the passions, and applying the cold judgment to the loving part of our being. This idle curiosity leads gradually to the most generous objects; it dries up the sensibilities, and, so to speak, deadens the soul: the mysteries of the heart are like those of ancient Egypt; the profane who seek to discover them, without being initiated by religion, are suddenly stricken with death.

DIDO, OR PASSIONATE LOVE.

IN modern times we have advanced to this commingling of the intellect with the passions, this new species of love, which, in its rarest and most disinterested form, is denominated friendship. The ancients were ignorant of the very name of that which is properly called love, among us.

Christianity has brought this sentiment to its perfection. She has unweariedly sought to refine and elevate the affections of the heart, and even

to spiritualize those tendencies which appeared to be the least susceptible of her influences. This so much disparaged religion has furnished a new order of poetical combination to those very authors who have derided it; one can perceive, in a large class of romances, the beauties which have arisen from this passion, although in them it is only half Christianized.

Richardson's Clementina, for instance, is a master-piece, which is not equalled even among the classic writers of Greece. But let us examine this subject more closely; and, without speaking of *rural love*, we will consider *passionate love*. This is not so holy an affection as conjugal fidelity, nor has it the simplicity of pastoral love; but, more extravagant than either, it ravages the soul where it reigns.

Not strengthened by the seriousness of marriage, nor influenced by the innocence of rural manners, allowing no other fascination but its own, it is, at the same time, its own illusion, its own substance, and its own folly. It is unknown to the mechanic and the laborer; the one is too busy, and the other too natural—for this passion only lives among the wealthier classes of society, whose leisure and indolence impose heavy taxes upon the heart, whose self-love is tormentingly active. Christianity, it is true, lights up the dark abyss of our passions; and the most distin-

guished orators of the Church have pictured the disorders of the soul, with the most powerful effect. How truthfully has Bourdaloux portrayed the ambitious man! And Massillon, how successfully has he brought, out of the recesses of our souls, our weaknesses and errors! "It is the character of this passion," says this eloquent man, "of absorbing the whole heart, &c.: one is fit for nothing; but, spell-bound, as it were, by this madness; rushing wildly hither and thither, retracing everywhere the fatal image, everywhere inordinate desires are awakened, whether in the world, or in solitude, as often by distance as by proximity, either by the most trifling or the most serious objects, even the holy temple itself, its sacred altars, its solemn mysteries, all alike subserve these passionate remembrances."

"It is an unruly distemper," continues this same orator, in his sermon upon the sinful woman (John chap. viii., ver. 3, &c.), "to fix our hearts upon that which can neither advance our moral perfection, nor contribute to our true welfare, or lasting contentment of soul; for, to love, is to seek happiness in the object we love; it is to demand and obtain, in the beloved object, all our souls need; we appoint it a savior for the soul's emptiness, to fill up the frightful chasm of which our hearts are conscious; and we fondly flatter ourselves that it will be able to supply all our

need; in it we imagine to have secured satisfaction for all our desires, a remedy for all ills, a dispenser of all our blessings. . . . But this creature-affection is filled with disappointment, and is cruelly variable and insecure; doubts are forever arising, whether our love is reciprocated; the heart restlessly torments itself with jealous fears, and vague suspicions; is it true and faithful, more deeply it will suffer; it will become the martyr to its own distrust: it is not necessary that I should tell you what your own experience teaches, or that I should address you in the style of your inordinate passions."

In this *strange* sickness, the presence of the object exerts at once a magical influence, and an irresistible power. Dido has continued to occupy herself with the cares of her government, and the interests of her native city; a storm arises, and brings a hero to her coast. The queen is no longer mistress of herself; a violent passion is enkindled in her soul; she forgets her kingdom, her discretion, and her virtue, and madly resigns her heart to its captor. But, alas, repentance too soon follows; the spell is broken, and the disenchantment is complete. Dido suddenly awakens as from a dream; she looks around her in terror, and finds herself alone and deserted, trembling, as it were, upon the edge of a frightful precipice. How soon has this charming abode vanished, of

which love had been the fairy architect ! Cloud-palaces, illuminated by the sun for a single moment, and then suddenly extinguished forever ! Dido rushes out wildly, calling after, and seeking Æneas.

Treacherous one ! how vain was thy hope to escape clandestinely from these shores, or to hide thy cruel designs from me. Could not our love, nor this hand which I have bestowed upon thee, nor yet Dido, ready to be consumed upon the funeral pile—could not *these* arrest thy steps ?

How eloquent is the grief, the passion, the truth, from the heart of this betrayed one ! The crushing emotions of her soul rush up so wildly, that her language becomes incoherent and disjointed, and her utterance becomes trembling and oppressed.

Observe the authorities whom she quotes in her supplications. Is it in the name of the gods, or of a sovereign, she speaks ? No ! She makes no account of the forsaken and humbled Dido ; but with meekness and love she entreats the son of Venus, by her tears and by her own hand given to the perfidious one ; if to this she joins a loving remembrance, it is but an effort to revive its influence over Æneas ; *by our nuptials, by our interrupted union. . . .*

She addresses also the places that witnessed her happiness, for it is natural to the unfortunate to animate or personify with their own emotion all the objects which surround them; abandoned by their fellow-creatures, they seek for pity by awaking the insensible objects around them with their sorrow. This roof, this friendly fireside, where she formerly sheltered the unworthy one, are the true gods for Dido. . . . Afterwards, with the dexterity of a woman, and a loving-hearted one, she recalls gradually the remembrance of Pygmalion, and of Iarbas, in order to arouse either the generosity or the jealousy of the Trojan hero. She imagines that *Aeneas* will be irresistibly moved by such a torrent of tears, imprecations, and prayers: in these moments of folly, the passions, incapable of pleading their cause with success, leave no method untried, even when their words are but wafted o'er the air, or lost upon the wind.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS A PASSION.

NOT satisfied with enlarging the sphere of the passions, in the drama and in the epoch, the Christian religion is herself a kind of passion, which has her transports, her enthusiasm, her joys and sorrows, as well as her sighs and tears; and she has also her devotees of the world, and her lovers of solitude. This, we are aware, will be derided by the world as *fanaticism*: our reply shall be in the language of Rousseau: “Fanaticism, though occasionally cruel and sanguinary, is, nevertheless a passion, which elevates the human heart, and renders it capable of great and noble efforts, and triumphs over death itself; which imparts to man a wonderful interior strength, and only requires a wise direction, to gush forth into the most sublime and noble virtues. Whereas infidelity has, in general, a rationalistic and transcendental spirit, permeating all life, and enervating and paralyzing the soul, concentrating every impulse in the meagerness of a selfish isolation, and in the subjection of humanity, and thus insidiously undermining the foundation of all society: so little has individualism in common, that it will never equalize the opposing principles of ordinary life.” But for the present we shall dismiss this question;

now, we are chiefly occupied with the dramatical effect. For Christianity herself, regarded as a passion, is a grand reservoir of treasures to the poet. This religious passion is so much the more energised, that she is in contradiction with all others, and that she must consume all with her sacred fire, which threaten to become her rivals. Like all great emotions, she is tinctured with seriousness, and even sadness; she leads through the cloistered aisles, and upon the solitary mountains. Christian excellence is not perishable—it is an eternal beatitude, for which the disciples of Plato sighed, and were willing to depart from earth. She veils herself to her earthly aspirants; she folds the drapery of the universe around her as a mantle; for, if but a single gleam falls directly upon the heart of man, he would not be able to sustain it, he would be overwhelmed amid *unutterable delights*. To realize the enjoyment of this supreme excellence, Christians have selected a different pathway from that of the Athenian philosophers. Their abode in this world was a continual self-denial, and by thus sanctifying their life-work, they became more prepared to possess the object of their desires. . . . Massillon, in describing this heavenly affection, thus proceeds: “The Holy One, the Lord alone is good, true, faithful, constant to His promises, amiable in His arrangements, magnificent in His

gifts, sympathizing in His tenderness, indulgent even in His anger ; the one only Being, great enough to fill the heart's immensity ; the alone One powerful enough to satisfy every desire ; the *One* who is alone generous enough to heal every grief, who alone 'hath immortality' forever to be loved ! indeed, the one Being, whom we shall ever regret to have so long delayed to love."

The author of the "Imitation of Jesus Christ" has given selections from St. Augustine, and the other Fathers of the Church, expressing the divine love in the most glowing and impassioned language :

"Truly, *love* is a great good, love is a most desirable wealth ; it will make the heaviest burdens light, and it will endure with equanimity the varied discipline of this life ; pain itself will lose its poignancy, and the bitterest draught will become sweet and pleasant." "The love of God is expansive ; it enkindles the noblest emotions in the soul, and inspires with desires after infinite perfection." "Love leads ever upwards — higher, higher, it will not permit itself to be enchained by earthly objects." "Love would be free, and would disentangle the affections from earth, lest its inward light should be dimmed, and lest it should be dazzled by its riches, or subdued by its adversities." "There is not, whether it be in heaven or on earth—whether it be gentle or pow-

erful—either more elevated or more expansive—either more agreeable or more satisfying—in fine, love is beyond all our comparisons, because love is of God, and, thus elevating itself above every creature, it can nowhere find rest but in God."

"He who loves is always happy; he runs, he flies, he is free, he cannot be enchain'd; he resigns everything, and yet possesses all things, because he reposes in the *one* only Being and Sovereign, who is above all, and who is the dispenser of every good and perfect gift." "He rests not satisfied in the gifts; but gives up his whole soul to the glorious *Giver*." "He only who thus loves, can comprehend the desires of love, and the earnest words which a soul awakened by God addresses to Him, when exclaiming: 'Thou art my God, thou art my beloved, thou art mine, and I am thine.' Attend, my heart, that thou mayest learn this depth of love by an interior and spiritual taste, enjoy this sweetness of love, and float thyself, thus to speak, in this ocean of thy love." "He who nobly loves," continues the author of the *Imitation* "will remain firm in temptations, and will never give way to the artifices of his enemy." And it is this Christian passion, it is this grand quarrel between the loves of earth, and the loves of heaven, which Corneille has described in his admirable dialogue. . . . This sentence, twice repeated: "*I am a Christian,*"

equals the finest sayings of the classics. Corneille, who is so conversant with the sublime, has conceded that the religious affection was capable of the highest elevation of enthusiasm, since the Christian loves God as the supreme excellence, and heaven as his native home. . . . No affection can be permanent, which is not cemented by virtue; the soul seeks truth; when led into error, it is because falsehood assumes for the moment the guise of truth. We are incessantly betrayed into deception, and yet we hate lying; this feebleness of soul attaches to us from our original depravity; we have lost moral power, and yet retain the evil proclivity; and we earnestly seek the *light* which our impaired vision cannot endure. The Christian religion, by the merits of the Son of man, has reopened to us a brilliant pathway through the shades of death, and has restored us to our birthright. Heirs with Jacob in the promised land, the Christian pants to enter this celestial City, the New Jerusalem, where his possessions are reserved. And this celestial affection, which our poets can chant after the manner of Corneille, unlocks a treasury of gems unknown to olden times, and which would not have been neglected by either Sophocles or Euripides.

UNDISCIPLINED PASSIONS.

IT is important to observe the condition of the soul, which, as a *prelude* to the passions, has been overlooked. In the undeveloped state of the passions—young, bracing, and ardent—they are imprisoned, as it were, and consequently feed upon each other, without an end or object. As nations advance in civilization, this irregularity of the passions will be increased; for it is a sad truth, that the living examples around, no less than the flood of publications which treat of men and manners, will but serve to give a premature wisdom, without its practical experience. Joy eludes us, and deceptions follow us; we recall our restless desires, and our dreamy illusions vanish. Imagination is prolific, abundant, and wonderful; every-day existence is poor, arid, and disenchanted. One dwells with a warm, living heart in an empty world; one is dissatisfied with *everything*, without learning the value of *anything*. This state of soul infects life with a bitterness that is incredible; the heart turns and tortures itself in a hundred ways to employ and consume its unprofitable energy. The ancients knew little of this secret disquietude, this poignancy of stifled passions, which prey upon each other. Politics, or the

business of the forum, or the exercises of the gymnasium, or of the martial field, as well as the affairs of every-day life, engaged their attention, and allowed no time or space for this weariness of the heart. Nor were they disposed to indulge extravagant expectations, vain hopes, or objectless fears; nor were they subject to the same flexibility of opinion, and practice, or love of variety, and change, which is a fruitful source of discontent and discouragement. . . . Indeed, the Greeks and Romans did not extend their vision beyond the concerns of this life, and had no suspicion of pleasures superior to the joys around them; their religious worship, unlike ours, did not lead out of the finite into the infinite, or inspire them with a taste for meditation and prayer. The adaptation of the Christian religion to the evils of our condition and necessities, ever portrays to us the two pictures of heavenly delights against earthly sorrows; and by this means she opens in the heart an inexhaustible source of hopeful reveries, amid its present contingency of evils with its future glowing hopes. The Christian calls himself a pilgrim, passing through a valley of tears, and finds rest only in the grave. The world is not the object of his desires, for he knows that man has but a few days to live, and the world with all that is therein is swiftly passing away.

The persecutions which the primitive Christians endured, assisted to promote this dissatisfaction with the objects of time and sense. Frequently robbed of their estates by invading enemies, their hearts received an impression of sadness, and perhaps even of misanthropy, which was never fully overcome. . . .

Thence has arisen a sinful melancholy (in fleeing from the duties of active life) enkindled by this play of the passions — *when these passions, without an object, become self-consumers in a solitary heart.*

FAITH.

AND which were the virtues so much recommended by the sages of Greece? Strength, temperance, and discretion. Jesus Christ could alone teach to the world that faith, hope, and charity, are virtues which suit no less the ignorance than the misery of men. Undoubtedly, this is a profound reason, which portrays faith to us as the source or foundation of the virtues. In this conviction is power or efficacy. An argument is not strong, a poem is not inspired, a painting is not striking, but because the mind or eye which judges of it is convinced of a certain truth con-

cealed in this argument, this poem, this picture. A small number of soldiers, persuaded of the skillfulness of their general, might perform miracles. Thirty-five thousand Grecians followed Alexander to the conquest of the world; Lacedæmonia placed confidence in Lycurgus, and Lacedæmonia became the wisest of cities; Babylon *believed* herself intended for greatness, and in her grandeur she was prostituted to her worldly faith; an oracle gave the world to the Romans, and the Romans obtained the world; Columbus alone, of all mankind, was obstinate in his belief of a new universe, and a new universe was wafted to him by fortune. Friendship, patriotism, love, all the noble sentiments, are also a kind of faith. It was because they *believed*, that Codrus and Pylades, and Regulus and the Arrians, worked wonders. Hence it happens that hearts which have no belief or trust, which treat as illusions the attachments of the soul, and noble actions as madness—who regard with pity the imaginations and the tenderness of genius, on this account—these hearts *never achieve* anything great or generous: they have no faith but in matter and in death, and they are already as insensible as the one, and as icy as the other. In the language of ancient chivalry, *give out*, or manifest thy faith, was synonymous with all the prodigies of honor. Roland, Du Guesclin, and Bayard, were trusty chevaliers;

and the fields of Roncevalles, D'Auray, De Brescy, the descendants of the Moors, the English, the Lombards, transmit to posterity the heroic men, who had faith and confidence in their God, their lady-love, and their king. What antique and touching ideas attach themselves to one single word, *fireside*,* the etymology of which is so remarkable! Shall we mention the martyrs, the heroes, who, as St. Ambrose relates, without armies, without legions, have vanquished tyrants, softened lions, took from the flaming fire its violence, and drew from the piercing sword its sharpness?

Faith itself, concealed under this figure, is a power so terrible, that she would overturn the world, if she were applied to perverse ends. There is nothing impossible to a man under the influence of a strong conviction, and who unconditionally submits his reason to that of another man. This proves that the most eminent virtues, when they separate from God, and when they are considered in their simple moral relations, approximate the greatest vices. If philosophers had made this discovery, they would not have taken so much pains to fix the limits of good and evil. Christianity has not required a scale, or shell, like that of Aristotle, to place *there*, ingeniously,

* Our beautiful English word, “*home*,” is not expressed in French.

one virtue between two vices ; it has *decided* the difficulty more surely, by showing us that the virtues are virtues only so far as they *reflow* towards their source ; that is to say, towards God.

The virtues of society grow out of faith ; since it is true, by the unanimous agreement of the wise, that the doctrine which commands a belief in a Deity, who punishes and rewards, is the firmest support of politics and morals. If we apply faith to her legitimate ends, and cause her to look upwards towards the Creator ; if we make her the intellectual eye, by which we discover the wonders of the holy city, and the empire or domain of real existences ; if she applies her wings to your soul, to elevate you above the trials of life, you will acknowledge that the Bible has not exalted this virtue too much, when the prodigies are told which can be performed through her sacred influences. Celestial faith ! Consolatory faith ! Thou doest more than transport mountains ; thou bearest the grievous burdens which oppress mankind.

HOPE AND CHARITY.

HOPE, the second theological virtue, has almost the same strength as faith; desire is the father of power; whoever strongly desires, obtains. Jesus Christ said: "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Pythagoras says, in the same sense: "*Power dwells near necessity*; for necessity implies privation, and privation walks side by side with desire." Desire, or hope, is a true genius, and the originator of power. It is that, in man's estate, to which he is born, and that innate aspirating which is *never* extinguished. Does a man find himself defeated in his endeavors, it is because he had not desired with earnestness; it is that he is wanting in that love which grasps, sooner or later, the object to which he aspires; of that love which, in the Divine Being, embraces all and rejoices over all worlds, with a boundless and ever-satisfying hope, and which revivifies itself continually.

There is, however, an essential difference between faith and hope, as regards their vigor. Faith receives her inspiration from *without*; she comes to us as a stranger. Hope, on the contrary, receiving her influence from *within*, pleasantly diffuses herself around and beyond us. The first is imposed upon us; the second springs from our

own wishes ; *that* is an obedience, *this* a love, or an affection. But, from faith, the other virtues flow more naturally as she proceeds direct from God ; consequently, being an emanation from the Eternal, she is more beautiful than hope, which is but a part of man ; therefore, the Church has justly placed faith in the first rank. But hope offers in herself an individual character ; it is that which brings her in connection with our miseries. Undoubtedly, that religion which makes a virtue of hope was revealed from Heaven ! This nurse of the unhappy, placed near to man, is like a mother near her sick child, who cradles it in her arms, nourishes it from her maternal fountains, presenting the refreshing cordial which soothes its grief. She sits a watcher at its lonely pillow, and lulls it asleep by her magical songs. Is it not strange to see hope, whose office it is so gently to guard us, and which seems a spontaneous movement of the soul, transformed, for the Christian, into a virtue strictly enjoined ? so that he would be obliged to take a long draught at this enchanted cup, where so many sorrowful ones esteemed themselves happy if but for a moment they could moisten their lips. Nay more, and here is the marvel, he will be *rewarded for having hoped, for having, in this manner, secured his own felicity.* The faithful, always militant in this life, ever contending with the enemy, are treated

by religion, even in their defeat, like the conquered generals whom the Roman senate received in triumph, for the sole reason that they had not *despaired* of final safety. But if the man whom hope never abandoned was, by the ancients, regarded as something remarkable, what would they have thought of the Christian, who no longer *talks* about hope, but *cherishes* it as *his life*? As to charity, daughter of Jesus Christ, in the proper sense she signifies *kindness and joy*. Religion, wishing to convert the human heart, and to direct our affections and our tenderness to advantage, has *invented a new passion*; she has, in order to explain it, availed herself neither of the word love, which is not sufficiently rigid, nor of the word friendship, which loses itself in the tomb, neither of the word pity, which is too nearly allied to pride; but she has found the expression, *charity*, which embraces love, friendship, and pity, and which, at the same time, contains something celestial, or heavenly. By this she directs our thoughts towards heaven, refining them, and reconveying them towards the Creator; by this she teaches us this wonderful truth, that men should, so to speak, love themselves through God, which spiritualizes their love; thus employing this immortal essence as a conductor towards him. But if charity, directly emanating from the Eternal, and from his word, is a Chris-

tian virtue, she is also in strict alliance with nature. It is this uninterrupted harmony of heaven and earth, of God and humanity, by which the character of the true religion is recognized. The moral and political institutions of antiquity are often in opposition with the feelings of the soul. Christianity, on the contrary, ever in agreement with the affections, does not command abstract and solitary virtues, but virtues drawn from our wants, and useful to us. It has placed *charity* as a well of abundance in the midst of the deserts of life. "Charity," says the Apostle, "suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

DESIRE OF HAPPINESS.

WERE there no other proofs of the existence of God than the wonders of nature, these are so striking, that they would be sufficient to satisfy any sincere inquirer after truth. But if those who deny a Providence find it difficult to explain these miracles, without acknowledging a superintending Mind, they will find themselves still more embarrassed in answering the questions of their own hearts. In renouncing a Supreme Being, they are obliged to deny a future existence; and yet their soul is troubled and uneasy; she presents herself, as it were, before them, and compels them to acknowledge, in spite of all sophistries, her existence and immortality. If, as they believe, the soul is extinguished in the tomb, whence arises this restless desire of happiness which torments us?

It is not impossible to satisfy our earthly passions; love, ambition, anger, can be fully satisfied; this soul-thirst is the only want which seems to have no answering object; for we know not, indeed, the nature of that felicity for which we sigh. We must grant that, if all is material, nature has made a grand failure; she has created an instinct, which can find no response or adaptation

to anything. It is certain that the soul demands an infinite good ; for no sooner is she in possession of her coveted object, than she desires anew —the universe itself cannot satisfy her. Infinity is the only platform upon which she can expand herself ; she enjoys arithmetical problems, in measuring the grandest and the smallest dimensions. In fine, excited and inflamed, rather than content with what is discovered, she ardently flies to the bosom of God, whence flow all ideas of the infinite, in perfection, in time, and in space. But she plunges herself into this Divinity, because this Divinity is unsearchable. “Clouds and darkness are round about Him.” Ps. 97, ver. 2. “Verily Thou art a God, that hidest Thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.” Isaiah, chap. xlvi. ver. 15. Could she even obtain a distinct view, she would disdain it, like all the other objects of her measurement. And there is some reason in this ; for, if the soul could perfectly explain the eternal principle or divine essence, she would be either superior to this principle, or at least an equal. The rule is different with respect to divine and human objects ; a man may understand the power of a king without being a prince ; but a man who comprehends God must be God. For the animal creation is not perplexed with these aspirations which convulse man’s heart ; the frisking lamb is happy upon the meadow turf, and the tiger is

content with his pristine range. If, as some philosophers assert, the different arrangement of the organs constitute the only advance which man has made over the brutes, this reasoning might be admitted for purely mechanical acts ; but of what service is my hand to my thought, when, in the clearness of a starry night, I glance throughout all space to find the Director of so many worlds ? Why does not the ox imitate me ? The instincts of nature suffice for him ; my feet and my arms would be useless incumbrances ; he can slumber upon the green sward, or raise the head towards the sky, and ask in his roaring after that unknown Being who fills immensity with His presence. But no ! satisfied with the turf upon which he treads, he asks no questions of the firmament, nor of the brilliant suns, which declare there is a God ! These spectacles impress not the unconscious animal ; and yet, as he peacefully obeys nature's laws, and rests beneath the shade-trees, he is himself no small proof of a Provident Creator. The only creature who is not sufficient to himself, and who is continually seeking something beyond and above, is man. They tell us the peasantry feel nothing of this disquietude ; undoubtedly, they are happier than skeptical philosophers, as they are diverted from these anxieties by their daily toil ; the sweat of the brow allays for a season this insatiate thirst after happiness. But, when you

observe them toiling for six days of the week, in order to enjoy a seventh day's rest, ever seeking, yet finding not repose, until death comes to them in the midst of their heart-longing, will you tell us, that they share not the secret aspirations of all men after an unknown felicity? It is pretended that the narrow bounds of earth can satisfy, but it is not the fact; for, offer to the poorest laborer the richest gifts, relieve all his wants, and give him perfect repose — after a few months have elapsed, he will again become weary, and a prey to new desires. . . . If it is impossible to deny that man's aspirations reach even to the tomb; if it is certain that the wealth of earth, far from allaying this thirst, only serves to deepen the soul's need, and to increase its avidity, we must of necessity conclude that there is a something beyond time. "The ties of this world," says St. Augustine, "are attended with real hardship, and false pleasures; with real sorrows, and evanescent joys; with severe labor, and but little repose; with many afflictions, and but empty joys. Far from complaining that the desire of happiness has been placed in this world, and her attainment in the next, let us in this admire the goodness of God. Since we must, either sooner or later, leave this world, Providence has extended a powerful attraction beyond its boundaries, to draw us thither, and to diminish the terrors of

the tomb : when a mother would encourage her child to leap over an obstacle in the pathway, she extends to him, from the other side, an agreeable object, to allure him onwards."

REDEMPTION.

ALTHOUGH the Trinity will ever be to man, in this life, a mysterious truth, yet *redemption* opens the wonderful history of his humanity, his destination, and his soul. . . . The Trinity confounds our thoughts, overwhelms us with glory, and we shrink into nothingness before the Triune Jehovah. But the affecting history of redemption, in filling our eyes with tears, prevents their being too much dazzled, and encourages us to fix them at least a moment upon the Cross. Out of this mystery arises the doctrine of original sin, which reveals man's nature and trial. Reject this truth, received by tradition among all nations, and we are immersed in impenetrable darkness. In what manner shall we otherwise account for the vicious proclivities of our nature, which are resisted by an inward voice, telling us we were made for virtue ? How otherwise, but by a principle of declension, can we account for the ages of toil man has endured,

"eating his bread in the sweat of his brow;" his constant exposure to sorrow, and trial, and tears; the misfortunes of the righteous, and the fearless impunity of the wicked?

The philosophers of antiquity, owing to their ignorance of this fact, were betrayed into many curious doctrinal errors. We require no other proof of the fatal truth, of the sad tainture of our birthright, than the recollection of the curse pronounced upon Eve, which is being fulfilled every day before our eyes, and which the Redeemer came to remove. What mysteries foretell man's twofold destiny, enfolded in the joys and sorrows of maternity! How wonderful are the ways of the Most High! how merciful, even in His justice! After all, every day we witness examples of the father's crimes visited upon his son, and a long course of wickedness culminating upon the head of a virtuous descendant—strong proof, alas! of a taint in the blood. But a God of mercy and of grace, foreseeing the consequences of our lapsed condition, has come down from heaven, and devoted himself to save us. Let us not appeal so much to our understandings, as to our hearts, all weak and guilty as we are, in regarding the death of the Just One for the sinner. If this Son, "beloved of the Father;" this example of obedience, and of faithful affection; Olivet's prayerful retreat, the bitter cup, this bloody

sweat, this soul-agony, this sublime virtue, this cross, this broken rock, this rended veil, this darkened sun; if thus beholding God dying for man will not soften our hearts, and enkindle our love, it is to be feared we shall forever be incapable of apprehending *the sublime in action, an embodied miracle.* . . .

Upon the scheme of redemption we shall hazard some thoughts, in order to show that the Christian theory is not so absurd as some vain philosophers would suppose. Universal tradition teaches that man was created in a perfect state, from which he has fallen. This opinion has been supported by the learned of every age and country, as the only rational solution of man's present moral condition. Thus man becoming mortal and imperfect through his disobedience, has forfeited his original destination to immortality and perfection. The question is, how to recover him from this condition? He cannot reach it through his own energy, for the same reason that a sick man cannot exercise the same elevation of thought that would be feasible to a healthy mind. We see here at once a disproportion between the weight to be raised, and the power required to move it; there is, then, a necessity of some help on our side, or of a Redeemer. Your arguments are all very well for the early ages, they reply, but we are fully equal to attain our immortality. How

unjust and absurd, to punish us all for the sins of our ancestors !

Without pronouncing upon the right or wrong of the matter for the present, we shall be satisfied that there is, in fact, such a law. Everywhere around us we behold innocent children, suffering through the parent's neglect and guilt ; it is a natural physical law which seems to pervade the universe. Unfortunate children enter into life laden with diseases, through the parent-veins. Do we, then, complain of nature ? Why should we ? The sicknesses of the soul, like bodily ills, perpetuate themselves by a common law ; and a man will receive, in his latest posterity, the meet reward of his deeds. Universal tradition confirms the fall of man, the transmission of natural and physical evils from generation to generation ; yet the original destiny of man was to perfection of nature and of being. *Redemption* is, then, a *necessity*, if humanity is ever to be restored to its original state from which it has fallen. This truth, once admitted, will discover to us the way in which it may be restored. This power must either be in man, or above man. In man, in order to redeem, the price must bear a proportionate value to that which is to be redeemed. Or, let us imagine, for a moment, that sinful and mortal man should himself attempt to regain his perfect and immortal destination. How could sinful man

atone for his own sins, much less for the evils of a world? Heaven seems to have waited until four thousand years had rolled on from the fall until the recovery, in order to let mankind prove how insufficient the entire race of humanity were for such an offering. We can arrive at no other conclusion, but that a Redeemer must be found in a condition above man.

Milton has a sublime idea, when he supposes that, after the fall, the Eternal demands of the affrighted heavens if there was one who would sacrifice himself for the salvation of humanity. Profound silence rested upon the angelic assembly; and, amid the countless orders of seraphim and cherubim, of thrones and dominions, of angels and archangels, not one was inspired to offer himself for this sacrifice.

This imagination of the poet is a grand theological truth. . . . If the Son of Man himself found the cup bitter, how could ever an angel have carried it to his lips? He could not have drank it to the dregs, and thus the sacrifice would have failed to be accomplished. Our Redeemer must, then, come from the Godhead; must be one of the three persons existing from all eternity; we see the Son, by His divine nature, is the one alone to redeem us. The Lamb of God, which dwelt in His bosom; the well-beloved Son, medium which reunites the two extremes — life-principal in na-

ture—He alone could reconcile man to His Creator. He came — this new Adam — man according to the flesh — man-perfect in keeping the law, yet God-man according to His Essence. This humiliation of Christ to atone for man's pride, is the most wonderful of all mysteries. Christianity is not affected by vain witticism, or scoffing ribaldry. The Gospel was designed for honest, simple minds ; the promises are to the poor in spirit : “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God ;” its precepts are all plain, so that “a wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.” Her doctrines have their home in the heart, and not only in the head ; she does not teach us how to argue, but *how to live*. Nevertheless, the wisest philosopher may find therein a mine of untold wealth for his research. The *Bible* is the fountain of divine truth ; the most affecting histories, with the sublimest actions, are intermingled with the most profound mysteries, and the most guileless simplicity. Such are the truths of Revelation, that we expect to find a natural eloquence in the Gospel, although destitute of all scientific display ; so divine is their authority that, to admit one point, you are constrained to accept all. For, if you hope to escape by denying one fact, such for instance as original sin, soon carried on from one conclusion to another, you will be obliged to resort to atheism ;

but, from the instant of acknowledging its first truth, there is a God, you will be compelled to believe in the Christian religion, despite all your previous notions and dogmas, as Clarke and Pascal have remarked. This, as it seems to us, is one of the strongest proofs of Christianity. In conclusion, we feel no surprise as we behold the heavenly orbs rolling on, for century after century, over our heads, without confusion or disruption ; we can believe that, in a worship established by Himself, we should find the same law of order, and beautiful adjustment ; we are not astonished that He should cause the attractions and grandeur of His mysteries to turn in the circle of an irresistible logic, as He causes the stars, in their orbits, to bring again to us the refreshing flowers, after the wintry storm, each necessary and beautiful in their season. It is difficult to conceive of the infidelity of this age. If it is true, as philosophers assert, that religion is necessary for mankind, what form of worship should we exchange for that of our forefathers ? We have a sickening recollection of "*the reign of terror,*" when men attempted to rear altars to *liberty* over the wrecks of Christianity. With one hand they prepared scaffolds for their fellows ; and with the other they wrote over their temples : *Eternity, to God, and death (or annihilation) to man*—these very temples wherein crowds of unfortunates had

been once gathered, to receive consolation, where the God of the universe was once worshipped—these very temples were now dedicated to a *virtue*, whom no one recognised, and to the *Goddess of Reason*, who never yet dried a tear.

CHRISTIANITY A GREAT BLESSING TO MANKIND.

SERVICES RENDERED TO SOCIETY BY THE CLERGY, AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION IN GENERAL.

IT is, in fact, no acknowledgement at all, when we recognise only in a vague manner the benefits which Christianity has conferred upon mankind. We should adroitly penetrate into the nature of her gifts, and portray the grace with which she scatters her varied blessings, her remedies for human woes, her inexhaustible treasures, and her intelligence, with the general expansion of her resources. Religion ministers to our affections, the delicacy of our thoughts, and even to our proper self-love; she accommodates herself to our weakness, and gently sustains us. For ourselves, who have been for years interested in this study: so many lovely traits are revealed, such sure foundations, so many surprising sacrifices appear, that we are convinced that there is merit enough

in Christianity wherewith to expiate all the crimes of men: celestial religion! which requires us to love even this sad humanity which so unjustly calumniates her. In order to present a general idea of the immense benefits of religion, we shall imagine Christianity to be a great republic, where all that is operating in one part is at the same time carried out in the other portions. Thus, when we shall speak of hospitals, missions, or of the colleges of France, the same may be said of the missions, colleges, &c., of Italy, Spain, Germany, Russia, England, America, Africa, and of India. We must see (to say the least) two hundred millions of men, who practice the same virtues, and make the same sacrifices. We must recollect, at the same time, eighteen hundred years have elapsed since these virtues were represented, and that these same acts of love and faith have, during this long interval, been repeated over and over again. But the mind fails in computing the number of individuals solaced and enlightened by Christianity, among so many nations, and during such a long succession of ages!

MISSIONS.

GENERAL IDEA OF MISSIONS.

HEREIN we see one of the great and novel ideas which belongs only to the Christian religion. To the idolator this divine enthusiasm was unknown, which animated the Apostle to the Gentiles. The ancient philosophers were far enough from deserting their academic retreats, and the luxuries and delights of Athens, to go, at the beck of a divine impulse, to humanize the savage, to instruct the ignorant, to heal the sick, to clothe the naked, or to disseminate the seeds of concord and peace among warlike nations: this is what the Christian religion has done, and is doing every day. The ocean storms, the polar ice and gloomy day, the scorching tropics—none of these things moved them; they lived with the Esquimaux, wrapped in his seal-skin, and with the Greenlander they partook of his oily fare; they scour the desert with the Tartar and Indian, while they follow the wandering Arab, and travel with the Caffre the burning desert sand. They have their converts in China, Japan, India, and there is no ocean isle, or reef, that has escaped their zeal; and whereas, formerly, Alexander

wanted more kingdoms to feed his ambition, in their love and faith they demand the earth itself as their trophy.

When regenerated Europe became as a band of brothers under the preaching of the Cross, these disciples turned their attention towards those regions which were still languishing under the darkness of idolatry. They were moved with compassion, in seeing this degradation of man ; they were constrained to devote themselves to the salvation of these strangers. This heroic decision led them through dismal marshes, into impenetrable forests, to plunge into foaming rivers, and to ascend inaccessible rocks : it exposed them to the jealousy of cruel and superstitious nations : on the one hand, they had to contend with the barbarism of ignorance ; while, on the other, they were met by the prejudices and vices of civilization. They had counted the cost, and were firm and steadfast in their benevolent attempt. Those renegades who have revolted from the religion of their fathers, will at least acknowledge that there is a sublimity in the self-devotion of these missionaries, who, being fully persuaded that there is no salvation but through the Gospel of Christ, submitted to unheard-of evils, in order to tell the “good news” to every creature.

When a man, in the sight of an admiring crowd, within view of his parents and friends, ex-

poses himself to death for his country, he only exchanges a few short hours of life for ages of glory. Through him, his family become illustrious, and are elevated to riches and honors. But the missionary, whose life is consumed in the depths of the forests, where he dies a frightful death, unconsoled by even one sympathizing spectator, his deeds unheralded by fame, and leaving no patrimony to his family—obscure, despised, treated as a fool, an idiot, and a fanatic—submitting to every opprobrium, and to every hardship and torture, in order to save the soul of an unknown savage—in what terms can we speak of this death, this sacrifice ?

DEFENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

IN perilous times, ought not every Christian to be a priest, and confessor of Jesus Christ ? Most assuredly, Chateaubriand would never have dreamed of writing in defence of Christianity, were there not poems, and romances, and books of all kinds, in which religion is derided and contemned. And it is well to defend religion from impious sarcasms, and to prove that, if the infidel pen can scandalize her as ignoble and ridiculous, without taste or genius, as destitute of attraction or tenderness, and as the enemy of all progress—the religious writer should boldly plead her cause, and

stamp her nobility, simplicity, and divine beauty and attraction, and reclaim her from the abuse of her ignorant opposers. Convince the young that an honest man can be a Christian without being a fool; dissipate the notion, that only rogues and idiots embrace religion, and your cause will soon be gained: the victory will require time, it is true, but only attract their attention, and, in addition to reason and fact, draw out their affections, and you may lead them whithersoever you will. Would you conduct your patient by a single track to the summit of a steep mountain? Show him, at every step, the varied beauties around him; allow him to pause, and gather the lovely flowers which bloom upon the pathway; and, by almost imperceptible degrees, he will reach the top. This book has not been written solely for the Christian, and the scholar, but for the world, for persons in all conditions; it is designed to interest the most trifling young man, and to divert him from the pages of the insidious novel, or infidel production. How! exclaims a well-intentioned but timid spirit, would you seek to make religion popular? Ah! indeed, would to God that religion was fashionable in this sense—that Christianity would fashion the opinions of the whole world. This, it is true, would offer a shelter to private hypocrisy; but it is certain, on the other hand, to improve public morality. The rich

would no longer tempt the poor, nor the master corrupt the dependant, nor the father give atheistic principles to his children; religious observances would lead to faith in her doctrines, and, with reviving piety, there would be a new era of morality and virtue. Infidels have sought to enlist the popular voice in their support, or to make impiety fashionable; and yet it is only the frivolous and perverted who are thus beguiled. Chateaubriand has studiously sought to efface this impression; and how much stronger is his truthful simplicity than the brilliancy of error! Our author would employ the same weapons in defence of Christianity which are wielded against her: he has united example with precept; he has shown how religion embellishes and exalts our existence, corrects our passions, without extinguishing them, investing all employments in which she operates with a peculiar interest. He points out the beautiful sympathy which unites her doctrines with the heart's emotions, and with the scenes of nature; that she is indeed the great consoler amid the trials and misfortunes of life; and he is not content with merely advancing these sentiments, but he proves them in his works. To enter into this writer's spirit, to appreciate his works, we must love religion, as well as perceive its utility. A prominent idea is to make religion attractive to our hearts, as well as to demonstrate its merits

and utility to our understandings. Pascal says, that two discoveries are found in the truths of our religion, viz., a divine beauty which makes them amiable, and a holy majesty which makes them venerable. "The heart has reasons, which are unfathomable to our understandings."

THE SABBATH.

WE have often before had occasion to remark the beauty of this seventh day, which corresponds to that of the rest from the Creation; this division of time was known in remotest antiquity. It is of no consequence to inquire, at present, whether this obscure tradition of the creation was transmitted to mankind through the descendants of Noah, or whether shepherds discovered this division of time by their observations of the stars; but one thing is certain, that it is the most perfect that any legislator could have enforced. Independently of its adaptation to the strength of men and animals, there is also a geometrical harmony, with which the ancients sought to connect the individual and general laws of the universe; she gives six days for labor, and six, by two simple multiplications, gives the three hundred and sixty days of the ancient year, and the three hundred and sixty degrees of circumference.

We discover both grandeur and philosophy in this religious law, which divides the circle of our labors, as well as the revolutions of the stars. As if man had no other cessation of his toils than the consummation of ages, nor less space for his sorrows, than the duration of time itself. . . . We know by experience that five days is too short an interval of labor, and ten is too long. During the reign of terror in France, the Convention could not compel the peasants to labor for ten successive days ; the strength of man and of beast was found inadequate to such a demand. Even the oxen give out at the end of the sixth-day labor, and seem to recognise the law marked by the Creator for the general rest of His creatures. The peasants say, our oxen know the Sabbath, and will not labor upon that day. “Even the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib ; but my people do not know, they do not consider.”

The Sabbath secures two great objects, being at the same time a day of leisure, and of religious observance. There is a necessity that man should relax his labors ; but, as the civil law cannot reach him in his pleasures, to remove all restraints, by abolishing the religious law, is to replunge him into a state of nature, and to leave him as a wild savage in the midst of society. In order to avoid this danger, the ancients made their day of rest also a day of religious observance ; and Chris-

tianity has consecrated this example. However, this blessed day of earth, this day of Jehovah's repose, offended the spirit of a Convention *who had made alliance with death—because they were worthy of such company.* After six thousand years of universal consent, after sixty ages of hosannas, the wisdom of a Danton, in daring impiety, affected to discover evil in the workmanship and laws of the Eternal, who had pronounced it all "very good." He would immerse us in chaos, and would substitute its traditional ruin and darkness for the creation-origin of light, and the order of worlds; he wished to separate the French people from all others, and to make them, like the Jews, a hated and isolated race; a tenth-day, in honor of the memory of Robespierre, was to be substituted for the ancient Sabbath, hallowed from time immemorial; this day sanctified by the worship of our fathers, regarded as a holiday and festival by millions upon millions of Christians upon the surface of our globe; the rest and joy-day of saints on earth, and of celestial bands; and guarded, even so to speak, by God himself in the ages of eternity.

SINGING AND PRAYER.

IT is generally conceded that, in lyrical compositions, the Hebrews have no superior; thus the Church which daily chants the lessons of the prophets, and the psalms, preserves a treasure in these beautiful sacred melodies. There is also, in the Gospels and the Epistles, an additional legacy furnished by the Apostles. Racine, in imitating these hymns, has confessed, with Malherbe and Rousseau, that they were worthy of his muse. . . . This music of Israel upon the lyre of Racine could not fail to please; no human voice is so powerful as this inner cord, and soul-tune, which, as Plato observes, sounds the morning alarum to those who have strayed from virtue, by *singing with omnipotent power in their hearts*. But, without dwelling upon these hymns, the prayers used by the Church are admirable; and it is only our habit of repeating them from our infancy, which dulls our perceptions of their excellence and beauty. What enthusiasm of applause would embalm Plato and Seneca, if their works should contain an expression of faith so simple, so pure, so clear as this is: “I believe in one God, Father, all-powerful, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.” “Our Father who art in

heaven." Herein we acknowledge one only true God. "Hallowed be thy name." God is alone worthy of our adoration. All things else are vain and unsatisfying. "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." Sublime sentiment, which comprehends all the Divine attributes: holy confidence, and resignation, which embrace the physical and moral order of the universe. "Give us this day our daily bread." How touchingly simple, yet philosophical! For what is man's real need?—a morsel of bread, and that required only day by day; for, will to-morrow be for him? "Who knoweth what a day may bring forth?" "And forgive us our offences as we forgive those who have offended against us." Herein is contained both morality and charity. "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." Behold the human heart unveiled; see man in his ignorance and weakness. He asks not for strength to conquer, but he prays that he may not be attacked, and for deliverance from temptation and suffering. He alone who created man could thus fully understand and supply His creature's need. Have we ever pondered, what a restraint prayer is upon a being so blind and impulsive as man: witness his daily and humble confession: *I have sinned in my thoughts, words and actions.* Pythagoras had recommended a similar confession to his disciples; but it was the glory of Christianity

to realise the dreams of virtue which were merely shadowed forth by the teachers of Rome and of Athens. . . . The acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition, dispose the heart to virtue ; the Christian prayers and ceremonials relative to civil or religious objects, or even the common occurrences of life, present the most elevated sentiments, the most perfect arrangement, the most affecting remembrances, in a style at once simple and sublime. . . . We shall never forget the impression of our own hearts during a shipwreck, in which this psalm was read : "Oh ! give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good. For He commandeth and raiseth up the strong wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." . . . The Christmas carols of our grandfathers also possessed merit ; they thus preserved the simplicity and vitality of their faith. There is an irresistible charm of truth and nature in rural sounds, and village melodies. The Christmas hymns, which describe rustic scenes, have an inexpressible grace, from the lips of a female. When accompanying her voice with her spinning-wheel, with her little ones around her, listening, riveted, and entranced, to the story of the infant

Saviour in the manger, we should seek in vain for sweeter melody, or a religion more consoling and appropriate to a mother.

CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS.

CHRISTIAN festivals are not like the oblations of Paganism; they do not lead in triumph a sacred ox-god, or stag, nor are they compelled to worship, under pain of imprisonment, a cat or a crocodile; or to become intoxicated in the street, and to commit all kinds of abominations in honor of Venus, Flora, or Bacchus. In our solemnities, on the contrary, every observance is pre-eminently moral. If the Church has banished the dance from them, it has been in view of the evil tendencies which lurk around an amusement apparently so innocent. The God of the Christian desires the affections of the heart, and the peaceful movements of a soul which regulates the harmonious concert of the virtues. . . . The Christian festivals are admirably sympathetic with nature. The feast of Corpus Christi occurs at a moment when the heavens and the earth declare His power, when the woods and the fields teem with life and vegetation: all are united by the tenderest ties—not a single plant stands widowed in the meadows.

The falling leaf, on the contrary, is the sign of man's mortality, who withers as the flowers of the field . . . Those who have forgotten the faith of their childhood, when a religious festival was a family reunion, and who affect to despise those simple pleasures of innocence, most unquestionably are to be pitied. What do we receive in exchange for these harmless enjoyments? Alas! they have failed; the Convention had holy days; then famine was called holy, and the hosanna was changed into the fierce cry of *death forever!* Strange event! powerful men, speaking in the name of equality and the passions, have never been able to found a festival; and yet the most obscure saint, who had only talked of poverty, obedience, and self-denial, had his joyful days, at the very moment when the observance of his religion doomed him to death. Let us hence learn, that festivals which spring from a religious emotion, and from a grateful remembrance of benefits enjoyed, are those alone which are likely to be durable. It is not sufficient to call upon men *to rejoice*—for there are days of mourning, as well as of joy; and we will often find that we are more ready to weep, than to command our smiles. We cannot doubt, but that these religious observances were of infinite value to the support of good morals, and in retaining and encouraging cordiality and

love between neighbors and friends. Former customs are already becoming obsolete, when a mother, upon the death of her husband, would send for her eldest son, and resign to him the household keys, and instal him as head over the family. We have not retained this high sense of man's dignity, which Christianity has inspired. The mothers and the children would rather trust to the written contract, than confide in nature's instinct of affection; and the law is everywhere exalted to regulate manners. The Christian festivals were so much more delightful, as they were a relict of olden times; and we are pleased to discover, in examining the past, that our grandfathers were accustomed to commemorate the same day as ourselves. These festivals were, besides, often repeated; the result was that, in spite of the evils of life, religion had found means to give, from one generation to another, some happy hours to millions of sorrowful hearts.

CHRISTIAN TOMBS.

IN our religion we can speak of the grave in a cheerful spirit, with hope and consolation ; we feel that it is only the resting-place of the body. The monuments of idolatry speak only of the past ; those of the Christian point to the future. Christianity is perfect in all things, and she has never encouraged those crude notions so prevalent in false religions. Thus, in relation to sepulture, she has disregarded all ancient superstitions, with reference to circumstances and places ; she has distinguished herself above all other religions, by the sublime custom of depositing the ashes of the faithful within the shadow of the temples of the Lord, and she carries her dead within the bosom of the Living God. Lycurgus had no fears, in placing tombstones in the midst of Lacedæmonia ; for he thought, with us, that the ashes of the fathers, so far from abridging the days of the children, prolonged in reality their existence, in teaching them the moderation and virtue which would conduct them to a happy old age. Those human reasons which are opposed to the divine, are far from being convincing. Do Frenchmen live longer than the other nations of Europe, who still continue to bury their dead within their towns ?

It was reserved for our age to accomplish what was considered as the greatest misfortune among the ancients ; and the very severest punishment was accorded to those wretches who would desecrate the ashes of the dead ; and, above all things, was sacrilegious dispersion applauded as the grand master-piece of philosophy. And what was the crime of our ancestors, that we should deprive them of their last resting-place, except this, to have brought into being such degenerate sons ? But let us regard the end of all this, and see the extent of human wisdom : in some of the villages of France they have built prisons upon their cemetery lots ; they reared their penitentiary over the places which God had decreed should be the end of all misery and bondage. For “there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest.” There is, in fact, one point of striking resemblance between these prisons and those cemeteries, and that an awful one, namely, that the iniquitous judgments of men were executed where God had pronounced the decesses of His inviolable justice.*

* The ancients would have considered that state as overthrown, in which the asylum of the dead was violated. We pass over in silence the abominations perpetrated during the days of the revolution. There is not a domestic animal in any nation, ever so little civilized, but is buried with more decency than the body of a French citizen was at that time.

COUNTRY CHURCHYARDS.

THE ancients had no burial-places to be compared, in beauty, to our country churchyards; the fields, the meadows, with the sighing trees, and bubbling water, a smiling perspective, surrounded with their simple images of beauty the laborer's tomb. We love to see the overshadowing yew tree, the fresh wavy grass, the poplars, the elm and box trees, the apple tree by the manse, with the small crosses, speaking of hope and consolation. In the midst of these peaceful monuments rises the village church, with its tall spire, surmounted with the rustic emblem of vigilance and alarm. In these retired spots, we hear only the song of the redbreast, and the noise of the sheep, as they crop the herbage over the tomb of their former shepherd.

There were pilgrim-tracks, and signs of poverty; for the rich and the careless passed not the way by these humble tombs. We marked the touching epitaph: *William, or Paul, with simply the year of their birth and death.* Upon some there was no inscription, not even a name. The Christian laborer here rests forgotten, in death, like the useful productions among which he lived! Nature makes no engraving upon the

oak trunks fallen in the forest. However, strolling one day through a country cemetery, we perceived a Latin inscription upon a stone, which told the tomb of an infant. Surprised at this display, we approached, to learn the erudition of the village curate. We read these words of the Evangelist: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

The graveyards of the Swiss are often placed upon rocks, whence you have a comprehensive view of their lakes, and precipices, and valleys. The chamois and the eagle there make their dwelling; and death grows upon these steep sites, like the Alpine plant, whose root is plunged into the eternal iceberg.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON HISTORY.

IF Christianity has so materially advanced the study of mental philosophy, it should also be favorable to the genius of history, since the latter is but a branch of moral and political philosophy. Whoever rejects the sublime sentiments which religion gives us of nature, and its Author, voluntarily relinquishes a fertile source of original thoughts and illustrations. It is not to be doubted

that he who has made the course of Providence his study will best understand men ; that man will have power to unmask human subtleness, who has been conversant with the secrets of divine wisdom. The intrigues of kings, the wickedness of large cities, the manœuvring and machinations of political life, the insidious pampering of the passions of men, the restlessness which oftentimes seizes the people against constituted authority, the frequent transmission of power from the king to the subject, from the noble to the plebeian, from the rich to the poor — these diverse influences will remain an inexplicable riddle to us, if we have failed to make acquaintance with the Most High, and His adjustment of the spirits of strength and prudence, of weakness and error, which He permits among the nations for their salvation or destruction. Let us, then, place eternity as the basis of time's history ; let us trace or connect everything with God, as the universal cause. Let us glorify Him, who reveals the secrets of all hearts, and who can thus bring a happy issue out of the present evils and disasters which afflict our race. God reigns over the the kingdoms of men ! ungodliness, that is to say, the absence of moral virtue, becomes the immediate cause of the downfall of any nation : this is, as it appears to us, a more noble historical foundation, and also a much more reliable one than

the first. In order to give an example, let us revert to the French revolution, that we may see if ordinary causes could have originated, in the course of a few years, such an unnatural and artificial state of manners, which obliterated all that was noble or ingenuous from the heart of man. The spirit of God having retired from the nation, nothing remained but their original depravity unrestrained, as in the case of Cain and his descendants. A reasonable mind must retire from the conflict, baffled at all attempts at reform; whoever would extend the hand of friendship, would behold this hand suddenly wither; the red flag waves over the city gates; war is declared among all nations; then the predictions of the prophet are fulfilled: "The bones of the kings of Juda, the bones of the priests, the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, will be cast out of their graves." Unmindful of the past, they trample under foot all their ancient institutions; having no hope in the future, they leave nothing to posterity; their tombs and their descendants are equally profaned. From this living page, transmitted by our ancestors, and from which we should learn wisdom for ourselves, we shall rest only upon the present time, and each one sacrificing to his own corruptions, as an abominable priesthood, see crimes increasing beyond all precedent, and that nothing worse can follow. Whilst this spirit of desolation

was consuming the interior of France, a better influence was protecting her borders. Upon her frontier alone were valor and prudence to be found, while, in the interior, everything is demolished ; beyond, all is victory and triumph. The citizens are no longer at their firesides, but in camp upon the Rhine, like to the times of the Merovingians : they believed that the Jews were to be driven out of the land of Goshen, to subjugate the barbarous nations of the deserts. No human event bears any relation to such a combination of circumstances. The religious mind can herein alone trace the profound designs of the Most High ; if the coalescing powers would have been satisfied to lull the revolutionary spirit, perhaps they might have succeeded, and France might have had a respite from her troubles, and quietly repaired her errors, and retrieved her misfortunes. But the Lord saw iniquity in all these high places ; and He said to the stranger soldier, I will break the sword in thy hand, and thou shalt no longer destroy the people of Saint Louis. Thus religion seems to lead to the explanation of the most incomprehensible facts in history. Besides there is, in the name of God, a power of majesty and glory, which imparts to the style a dignity of utterance, so that the religious writer is almost always the most eloquent. Without being religious, one may possess intellect, but

not true genius. Let us add, that we intuitively feel the honesty of a faithful historian, and are inclined to credit all that he relates. The sophistical writer, on the contrary, we distrust; for, in most instances, giving us the worst side of society, we are led to regard him as both deceitful and malicious.

BEAUTIES OF HISTORY.

BUT an objection is started here; if Christianity is favorable to the genius of history, why are modern writers often inferior to the ancients in this important division of literature? But this objection is not a strict fact, since one of the finest historical monuments which exists, "*The Discourse upon Universal History*," was dictated by a Christian spirit. But setting this work aside for the moment, the reasons of our inferiority, if such exist, deserve to be examined. The difficulty appears to be in two kinds—as pertains to the *history*, and also to the *historian*. Ancient history produces a picture, which modern times have not equalled. The Greeks have been especially remarkable for their heroic characters, and the Romans are no less wonderful for the grandeur of their works. Rome and Athens started,

from a state of nature, to achieve the highest degree of civilization, scaling the complete ladder of virtue and vice, of ignorance and culture. We see man and his thoughts developing, at first, as an infant; afterwards, led on by his youthful passions, wise and strong in his maturity; and then gradually dwindling away into old age, feeble and decayed. Man was adapted to his condition, passing from the royal or paternal government to the republican, and falling into despotism with the decrepitude of age. We must admit that modern history does not present so finished a picture, so complete a collection of subjects, or such great moral lessons, as are found in ancient history. The moderns, suddenly sprung up (mushroom-like), know not their origin; these are but young branches grafted upon old trees. You see, at once, great vices and great virtues; the most astonishing ignorance united with the most affected precision of language and thought. The ideas of Titus Livy, and of Bossuet, are affluent, and the language is flowing and connected; every word, as employed by them, has a distinct meaning, and originates from the preceding, and becomes the germ of the word which is to follow. It is not by banks, or straight lines, that the mighty waves flow on (if we may use this image); they direct, far away from their source, a richly-freighted vessel, which is ever

accumulating ; they roll grandly along the meadows ; they embrace, in their sportive undulations, great cities, and immense forests, and rush on to old ocean with a whirlpool of waters.

CHRISTIAN ELOQUENCE.

CHRISTIANITY furnishes so many proofs of her excellence, that, no sooner is one subject dismissed, than others demand our attention. Among the ancients, eloquence was confined to judicial and political subjects. Moral eloquence, that is to say, the eloquence of all times, of all countries, of all governments, descended from heaven to our earth through the Scriptures. Cicero defends a client ; Demosthenes triumphs over an adversary, or tries to rouse a degenerate people into patriotic ardor ; they both address the passions, and their only hope of success is in agitating their slumbering souls. Pulpit eloquence takes a higher range, and seeks a nobler victory. Her province is to discipline the passions of the enchanted and bewildered soul ; it is in moderation and calmness she would be heard. Her theme is love to God, and love for man, unchangeable and inexhaustible. The support of a party, the acclamations of the multitude, are not desired ; neither great occa-

sions for display : in the most peaceful era, at the grave of the humblest citizen, she would make the most sublime impression ; the most soul-stirring pleading would be on the behalf of obscure and oppressed virtue, and tears would flow for a man utterly unknown and neglected. Yielding neither to fear nor injustice, she boldly speaks the truth before kings, yet without insulting them ; and, without flattery, admonishes and consoles the unfortunate. While politics, and the affairs of time, are not neglected, they ever hold a secondary place ; she views them from her majestic elevation, as an eagle from a mountain peak looks upon the diminished objects beneath him. That which distinguishes Christian eloquence above that of the Greeks and Romans, *is the evangelical earnestness which is its soul* ; or, as La Bruyère says, the sublime melancholy which breathes through it. One may read once, perhaps twice, the orations of Cicero, and of Demosthenes ; while, over the sermons of Bossuet, of Bourdaloue, and of Massillon, one could meditate day and night. How justly and eloquently do these pious men reflect upon the emptiness of all earthly objects. “Our whole life,” they observe, “is but the panorama or vision of a day, and we consume this fleeting period with the most trifling pursuits. You attain the object of your wishes, you realise all your fond hopes, you become king, emperor, mas-

ter of the world ; a moment more, and death will efface these shadows with your own shadow." These kind of meditations, so earnest, natural, and sublime, were quite unknown among ancient orators. The heathen destroyed themselves, *in pursuing the shadows of life* ; they knew not that our real existence commenced only at death. The Christian religion has alone taught this great lesson of the tomb, through the writings of the Apostle Paul ; they no longer permit the half savages of Greece to argue upon the immortal mind of man, as of a material substance. Religion has been the source of eloquence in all ages, and in all countries. If Demosthenes and Cicero were naturally great orators, it is mainly owing to their religious tone of mind ; on every occasion they appealed to their gods. The members of the Convention, on the contrary, possessed but mutilated specimens, and feeble imitations of eloquence, because they attacked the faith of their fathers, and thus interdicted the inspiration of the heart.

MORAL HARMONIES.

AMONG the moral harmonies of Christianity, we must give a prominent rank to *popular devotions*, which consist in certain superstitions and rites, practised by the multitude, without being prescribed or forbidden by the church. It is, in fact, but the harmonies of the religion of Nature. When people imagine they hear the voice of the departed in the wind; when they speak of the visions of the night; when they go on pilgrimage for the relief of their woes, it is evident that these impressions are but the touching associations between natural scenes and sacred dogmas with the misery of their hearts. Consequently, it follows that these popular devotions combined in their worship will become poetical, since poetry is founded upon the feelings of the soul, in connexion with the accidents of nature, exalted into mystery with the aid of religious ideas. It would be lamentable if, while willingly following the guidance of reason, we should rigorously condemn the superstitions which aid the multitude in supporting the misfortunes of life, and which impose a morality upon them which the best laws would fail of securing. It is commendable—it is beautiful, so to speak—that God should be in all our

thoughts, and that we should feel ourselves constantly surrounded by His miraculous agencies. . . . The common people are wiser than their philosophers. Every fountain, each cross by the wayside, the sigh of the night wind, inspires awe and veneration. Nature is a constant miracle to the man of faith. . . . Happy, thrice happy, they who believe! Their every smile will be a perennial joy, and their tears will all be wiped away. Religion embalms them in her urn, and presents them to the Eternal. The steps of a true believer are never lonely; good angels walk by his side, counsel him in his dreams, watch over him, and defend him against the evil ones. These celestial friends are so devoted to him, that they consent to become exiles on earth for his sake. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation?"

Can we find, among the ancients, anything more praiseworthy than the former observances of our religion, now become almost obsolete. The custom of planting the cross is an emblem of suffering. In looking upon this emblem, the good Samaritan will drop a tear for the unfortunate, and the faithful citizen will offer a prayer for his brother. And then, perhaps this pilgrim was a stranger, buried far from his own country, as was the illustrious Unknown, sacrificed by the hands of men

whom He came to save, far from His celestial country. What condescension towards us from God! How does it ennoble human nature! How wonderful, that we should dare to trace any agreement between our mortal days and the eternal existence of the Governor of the world. . . .

A natural superstition seems to be connected with death, and the populace imagine a thousand forms of its announcement — so poetical, as it relates to unseen and immortal objects — so mysterious is its awful silence! Sometimes premonitions of decease are received through the tinkling of a clock which goes of itself; sometimes a dying person receives the warning by three raps upon the boards of his room. A mother, whose son died in a remote country, received the intelligence in her dreams. Those who ridicule all presentiments, will never know the secret telegraph by which two loving hearts may communicate with each other from one end of the world to the other. Various opinions have influenced humanity, but always of a religious character; they have often such a natural simplicity, as to embarrass the writer. Robbing a swallow's nest, killing a redbreast, a wren, or a cricket, farmhouse guests, or to neglect an old trusty dog, was regarded as an ill omen, a kind of impiety which would not fail to bring some disaster. Through a commendable respect for old age,

they accounted the presence of an aged person in a household to be a good omen; and that an ancient domestic brought happiness and good luck to his master. Herein we discern traces of the worship of the *lares*; and we are reminded of Laban's daughter carrying away her paternal gods. It was a common belief that no one could commit a wicked act, without being haunted forever after with frightful spectres. Antiquity, wiser than ourselves, knew better how to guard these harmless and useful harmonies, for the preservation of religion, conscience, and morality. Another opinion was also maintained, namely, that a man who rejoiced in ill-gotten gains had made a compact with evil spirits, and linked his soul with hell. Christian people were peculiarly the care of friendly divinities. For them all things were favorable; sunshine and storm, the changing seasons, their employments, agriculture, the arts: birth and infancy, old age, and matrimony, and death, each had their saint and patron. Let us not pass a rigid censure upon their credulity. Religion, far from laying down rules upon this subject, is satisfied to regulate their excess, and to prevent abuse and deception. She is concerned to inquire if the end is good, and whether, among the masses, virtue and morality will not be even better supported, than by the severity of the civil law itself. And is there a doubt of this fact,

in any reflecting mind? Violent declamation against superstitions often opens the door to every crime. The evils which would thereby accrue would confound sophists themselves, and would by no means remove the difficulty. In casting off religious restraint, the most monstrous opinions would be received and created. They would become the victims of terrors, so much the more frightful, as the object would be unknown; they would shiver in a graveyard, even when they should see written: "*death is an eternal sleep;*" and in affecting to despise the Divine power, they would interrogate the fortune-teller, or read their destinies from the whimsicalities upon a pasteboard. No! mysteries are unavoidable; a future of hope to man is a necessity, because he was made for immortality. One of the most striking proofs of the importance of some form of worship, is the existence of conjurers and necromancers among a people; it arises from a natural religious instinct. The approximation is very close, from a belief in *nothing*, to a belief in *everything*; when prophets have retired, a call is made for the diviners; and, when religious ceremonies are renounced, a resource is sought in witchcraft; and, when they close the temples of the Lord, they open the magician's cave.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON
MUSIC.

BROTHERS of poetry, the fine arts will now be the subject of our studies ; following naturally in the progress of the Christian religion, when she appears in the world, she is at once recognised as their mother ; they lend to her their terrestrial charms, and she inspires them with her Divinity ; music writes her hymns, painting describes her mournful triumphs, sculpture meditates with her over the tombstones, and architecture builds for her temples as sublime and mysterious as her own thoughts.

Plato has wonderfully defined the nature of music : "We ought not," he says, "to judge of music by pleasure, nor should those seek after her whose only object is pleasure, but those who contain within themselves a resemblance to the beautiful." In effect, music, considered as an art, is an imitation of nature ; it is then her perfection so to represent *her*, as to make her surpassingly beautiful, or to reproduce her in the most *beautiful manner possible*.

Or if pleasure is a thing of opinion merely, which varies with the times, manners, and people, and which cannot be *the beautiful*, since the *beau-*

tiful is forever the same, it is unity, and exists absolutely.

Hence every institution which has sought to purify the soul, and to eschew tumult and discord, has sought to revive *virtue*, and is by this quality alone a propitious offering to the most sublime music, or to a most perfect imitation of the *beautiful*. But if this institution possesses, besides this, a religious character, she then contains within herself the two essential conditions of harmony, the *beautiful* and the *mysterious*. Chanting comes down to us from the angels, and the true origin of harmonical concerts is heaven. It is religion which breathes out her sighs upon the night winds, from the youthful heart, beneath the tranquil dome of heaven; it is religion which sings so sweetly at the bedside of the unhappy. She utters, through Jeremiah, her lamentations, and she inspires the sublime penitential psalms of David. More stately under the ancient covenant, she describes only the sufferings of monarchs and of prophets; more modest and not less loyal under the new law, her gentle breathing agrees equally well with the powerful as with the weak, because she has found united, in Jesus Christ, humility with greatness. Let us add, that the Christian religion is essentially melodious, and for this single reason, that she loves solitude. It is not that she is an enemy of the world, but, on

the contrary, she carries herself very complaisantly towards it; but this heavenly Philomel prefers obscure and hidden retreats. She is chilled by a crowd, and is a retiring stranger among men; she rather loves to dwell amid the forests, which are the palaces of her father, and her ancient dwelling-place. It is there that she elevates her voice towards the heavenly firmament, from the midst of nature's harmonies; nature publishing without ceasing the praises of the Creator; and there is nothing more religious than the hymns which she sings with the winds, the oaks, and the reeds of the desert. Thus, the musician who would follow religion in her affinities, is compelled to learn to imitate these harmonies of solitude. It is necessary he should know the language of the trees, and of the waters; it is requisite that he should have heard the sound of the wind through the cloistered aisles, and the murmurs which reign in the Gothic temples, and around the churchyard ferns, and throughout the ivied vaults of the dead. Christianity has invented the organ, and has breathed her sighs even over brass. It has preserved music even in the barbarous ages of the world; and wherever she has placed her throne, there the people are taught to sing naturally, like the feathered songsters. When savages have been civilized, it has been accomplished through

her hymns; and the wild Indian who will yield nothing to her dogmas, is subdued by her sacred symphonies. Religion of peace! you have not, like other creeds, imposed upon mankind precepts of hatred and discord; you alone have taught them love and harmony.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON PAINTING.

THE Grecian writers record an incident, handed down from antiquity, which is treasured up as the origin of the art of painting. It was this: a young female, who, gazing upon the figure of her lover upon the opposite wall, sketched his outline with chalk, and thus produced, from a transient fancy, an art of the most perfect illusion. But the Christian school have been under the tuition of a greater instructor, even the Divine Artist Himself, who, moulding together a little dust in His magnetic hands, pronounces the words: "*Let us make man in our image!*" We have, then, received the first model from the hands of the Infinite Jehovah, who presented to the world this splendid picture of spiritualized clay, animated by the breath of the Creator. There is in error, as well as in truth, a power which constrains silence;

both, when carried to the extreme point, enforce conviction—the first negatively, the latter affirmatively. Therefore, when we hear that Christianity is the enemy of the arts, we remain silent, from astonishment; for we are at the same instant reminded of Michael Angelo, Raphael, the Caracci, Domenichino, Lesueur, Poussin, Cousiton, and a number of other artists, whose names alone would fill volumes. The Fathers of the Church lavished profuse encomiums upon paintings. St. Gregory thus expresses himself: “I could not behold the picture of Abraham’s sacrifice, without shedding tears, as the whole pathetic history was placed vividly before me.” . . . St. Basil goes still farther; for he asserts that painters stir up the soul as powerfully by their pencil representations, as the eloquence of the most impressive oratory. In the eighth century, a monk named Methodius executed that “*Last Judgment*” which converted Bogoris, king of the Bulgarians. . . . At length, about the thirteenth century, the Christian religion brought back triumphantly the choir of muses to the earth, after vanquishing numberless enemies. . . . The first architect was Bouchet, (a Greek), Nicolas the first sculptor, and Cimabue the first painter, that recovered the antique style from the ruins of Rome and Greece. From that time the arts attained great excellency, until, in the age

of Leo Tenth, when Raphael and Michael Angelo shone out with their resplendent genius upon the world. But it is not our design to give a complete history of the art. What we desire to show is, that Christianity is more favorable to the art of painting than any other religion. For it is easy to prove three things: first, that Christianity, being of a spiritual and mystic nature, presents to the artist a more *beautiful ideal*, more heavenly and sublime, than is found in any material worship: second, that, in disciplining and regulating the passions, she diffuses over the human countenance a more lovely and tender expression, and more clearly displays the soul in the muscles and proportions of the figure: third, that she has furnished the artist with more beautiful subjects, more liberal, dramatic, and touching, than those of mythology. The New Testament has improved and elevated the genius of painting. It has imparted a higher degree of tenderness, while still preserving its sublimity. Who has not admired, a hundred times, "The Nativity," "The Virgin and Child," "The Flight in the Desert," "The Crowning with Thorns," "The Sacrament," "The Mission of the Apostles," "The Descent from the Cross," "The Women at the Holy Sepulchre?" What can affect the heart like these sacred pictures? Christianity everywhere portrays to us virtue and mis-

fortune ; but polytheism is a description of unhal-lowed mirth and prosperity. As for our religion, it is our own history ; it is for our perusal that these lessons from so many tragical scenes are preserved. We are the figures in the pictures which the pencil has transmitted to us. Oh ! thou blessed religion of Jesus Christ ! be thou exalted forever on the earth ; thou hast represented, in the Louvre, "The Crucifixion of the King of Kings," "The Last Judgment;" on the ceiling of our court of justice, a "Resurrection;" and, at the public hospital, "The Birth of our Saviour," in the very homes of those orphans who have been forsaken by their father and mother !

SONGS OF BIRDS.

FOR MAN THEY ARE CREATED.

NATURE has her festival seasons, at which she summons the musicians from various regions of the globe. We may observe travelling thither (on wings of the wind), some astonishing performers and accomplished artists, trilling their unrivalled sonatas, and also wandering bards, whose skill consists alone in simple ballad singing ; while far beyond, in the blue ether, come the pilgrims, re-

hearsing a thousand times the tedious verses of their holy songs. List! The yellow-hammer whistles, the swallow purls, the wood-pigeon coos; the first warbler, perched upon the highest branches of a young elm tree, challenges our blackbird, who will not be surpassed by this stranger; now sounds the *secondo*, from beneath a friendly thatch, warbling his commingled strains, even until the season of evanishing; while a third songster, by his prolonged quavers, and amid embowered oak leaves, resembles the undulating notes of a horn in the woods; and this concerto is completed by the robin redbreast, who encores his little song over the barn door, where he has hidden his grand mossy nest. But the nightingale, disdaining to drown her voice in this symphonious chorus, awaits the hallowed hour of contemplation and repose, and then takes upon herself, amid the shadows of evening, her part in this musical entertainment. As the twilight deepens, and when the faint murmurings of busy day echo over the little hillocks and on the riverside, through the woods and over the valleys, and as silence increases, and hovers over the forest, so that not a leaf or moss trembles, and as the moon awakens in the heavens, then it is that the ear of man is attuned and listening to the finest and rarest choristers in the universe, chanting their hymns to the Eternal. At first echo

around brilliant peals of joy. The warbling is confused; it changes—now grave, then gay; now soft, then loud. There is a pause. It is slow—it is lively; it gushes from a heart exuberant with joy, palpitating with love. But suddenly it ceases: the bird is silent. It begins again! How changed are its accents! What tender melody! Sometimes they are languishing but varied modulations; sometimes the strain is rather monotonous, resembling the old French romances, master-pieces of simplicity and melancholy. Then, again, the song is as often expressive of sadness, as well as of joy. The bird that has lost its little ones still sings; but it is the well-remembered strain of bygone happiness, for he knows no other; but he has changed the keynote, by a rapid stroke of his art, and the canticle of pleasure has become the complaint of grief. Those who seek to disinherit man, and to take away the empire of nature from him, take great pains to prove that nothing is made for us. Now, for example, the ear is so nicely or finely accommodated to the warbling of birds, that a skilful persecutor of these hosts of the woods can ravish their nests, and remorselessly pursue them with snares or weapons, can torture and wound them, yet cannot impose silence upon them. Inevitably, despite our callousness, they are formed to charm us; they thus fulfil and accomplish the

design of the Creator. Even as captives in our dwellings, they increase their harmonies. There is no doubt some compensation hidden under this misfortune, for all the unhappy love to give vent to their grief in song; even as the bird-catchers, by a barbarous refinement of cruelty, in crushing out the eyes of a nightingale, rendered her voice yet more melodious. This Homer among birds obtained his living by singing, and composed his noblest airs after the loss of sight. Demodocus, saith the poet of Chios, in describing himself and the Phæcian achievements in their songs, made him the favorite of the muse; but good and evil had been strangely blended for him, for she had given increased sweetness to his songs (or verses), by imposing blindness upon him. Birds appear to us to be true emblems of the Christian here below; they prefer, like the faithful, solitude to the world, heaven to earth, and their voices extol unceasingly the wonders of the Creator.

LANGUAGE OF ANIMALS.

LAWS APPERTAINING THERETO.

THERE are some laws concerning the *cries* of animals, which, as it seems to us, have not been sufficiently observed, and which well deserve our attention. The varied language of the animals of the desert appear to us formed, either from their grandeur or from the time of day in which they appear, to be the charm of the places which are frequented by them. The strong, thirsty, and voracious roar of the lion is in keeping with the gloominess of the embrasures where he is heard, whilst the lowing of our kine and oxen charms the rural echoes of our valleys; the goat has something trembling and savage in his voice, adapted to rocks and ruins, where he loves to suspend himself; and the warlike horse imitates the slender sounds of the trumpet, and, as if he knew almost by intuition that he is not designed for rustic labors alone, he is passive under the husbandman's goad, but becomes inspired and elated under the bridle of the warrior. Philomel and the owl take in succession the dominion of night, and *mark* it either as charming or gloomy; the one sings to the zephyrs, groves, the moon, and

lovers ; the other, to the winds, ancient forests, darkness, and death. Indeed, almost all animals that live on blood have a peculiar cry, resembling that of their prey. The sparrow hawk squeaks like the rabbit, and mews like the young kitten ; grimalkin himself has a kind of purr or murmur, similar to that of the small birds which frequent our gardens ; the wolf bleats, bellows, or growls ; the fox shouts, or imitates the cluck of a hen ; the tiger roars like a wild cow ; and the sea bear makes a sort of wheezing or rattling sound, like the restless beating of the waves, where he seeks his prey. This law is very striking, and therein is, perhaps, concealed a frightful mystery. Let us observe that men monsters follow the instinct of these carnivorous quadrupeds ; tyrants even have often masked themselves under a tender sensibility of voice and manner, and outwardly they affect the language of the unfortunate ones whom they yet secretly intend to destroy ; nevertheless, a watchful Providence has not designed that their deceptions should *entirely* escape detection ; and, therefore, it has been ineffaceably imprinted in their countenance and expression ; and as we shall discover, on a closer examination of these ferocious characters, we shall find under their assumed mildness a false and cruel temper, a thousand times more hideous than their undisguised malice.

BIRDS' NESTS.

WE shall discover a beautiful arrangement of Providence in the construction of birds' nests. We cannot contemplate them without being moved by the Divine goodness, which gives industry to the weak, and foresight to the careless. As soon as the trees have unfolded their leaves, thousands of workmen begin their labors. The first carry long straws into the crevice of a dilapidated wall; the latter plaster their brick-work in the windows of a church; and others steal horsehair from a young colt, or seize upon a tuft of wool which the lambs have deposited upon a rock. There are wood-cutters, who cross the branches upon the top of a tree; and here are spinners, who wind their silken fringe over a thistle. Thousands of palaces are completed, and each one is a nest; and in each nest you may see charming metamorphoses — a delicate egg, and, soon afterwards, a tender little birdling covered with down. This nursling enlarges its plumage, and the parent-bird teaches it to balance itself upon its couch. Soon it jumps up, to peep over its tiny cradle, whence it takes its first view of nature. Trembling and pleased, it drops in again among its brothers, who have neither of them yet

seen this grand spectacle; but it makes a second attempt, reassured by its parent, and this young air-king, bearing its crowned head from infancy, ventures to look out upon the vast firmament, the waving pine-tops, and the depths of verdure beneath the paternal oak. Meanwhile, the forests are rejoiced to hail their new guest, the old bird, who having become disabled for flight, draws near to a running brook, where, resigned and dying, she rests upon the same bank and stream where she sang her loves, and upon one of whose trees her nest still hangs, with her harmonious offspring. In this place we shall mention another law of nature. In the class of the smaller birds, the eggs are generally colored with one of the prominent male streaks. The bullfinch makes her nest among the currant-bushes, the hawthorn, or amid the thickets of our gardens; the eggs are similar to its plumage, slate-colored. We remember, upon one occasion, having found one of these nests in a rosebush; it resembled a pearl shell, or incasing, holding four blue pearls: a rose tree drooped over it, sparkling with dew; the male bullfinch was perched upon a neighboring shrub, motionless, like a flower of purple and azure. These objects were mirrored in a clear stream of water, overshadowed by a walnut tree, which formed the foreground to the scene, and was gilded by the

beams of the rising sun. A bountiful Providence has presented to us, in this little picture, some idea of the elegance and variety with which He has enamelled nature. Among the larger birds, the law of the color of the egg varies. We conjecture that, in general, the egg is white among birds where the male has several females, or among those whose plumage has no fixed color for the species. In the classes of aquatic birds, and forest rangers, who make their nests, the one upon the sea, the other on the summit of the trees, the egg is generally of a bluish-green, and tinted, so to speak, by the elements with which it is surrounded. Certain birds, which sing amid high rocks and time-worn towers, have green eggs, like the jay, or reddish, like the brick building which they inhabit. It may thus be established as a universal law, that, upon her egg, the bird imprints the history of her loves, and the symbol of her manners and of her destiny. With a single glance at this frail monument, one can immediately tell to what species it belonged, what were its customs, its dress, its tastes ; whether it passed days of danger upon the sea, or, if more fortunate, it led a pastoral life ; whether it was civilized or savage, an inhabitant of the mountains or of the valleys. The forest antiquary has a less equivocal means of information than *he* of the city ; a leafless tree, or moss-covered oak,

will furnish a more direct and accurate account of its originator, than will a ruined column of the architect who devised its plan. Tombstones among men are the leaflets of their history ; nature, on the contrary, bears a living impress ; she does not require either granite or marble to perpetuate her writing. Time has destroyed the vast pyramids of the kings of Memphis, with all their pompous pageantries ; but it has not been able to efface a single letter of the engraving which the Egyptian ibis bears of her history upon her egg-shell.

THE INFIDEL AND CHRISTIAN MOTHER.

THERE are two classes of atheists, yet distinct from each other : the first assert unblushingly the doctrine that there is no God, and, consequently, that there is no difference between good and evil, and that the world belongs to the most cunning and powerful, or that "*might makes right.*" The second are the honest dupes of their own credulity, who, with feigned sweetness, make themselves ridiculous, by rushing into every folly to uphold their system. Sentiments of morality and kindness are ever on their lips ; most treacherously they salute you as *my brother*, whilst plotting your destruction ; they are triplets of wickedness,

conjoining with the vices of atheism, sectarian intolerance, and odious self-conceit. These men pretend to say, that infidelity does not destroy happiness or virtue, and that it is quite as profitable to be unbelieving as to be religious ; it is this point we would examine. If utility is a reasonable gauge of the merits of this subject, then, surely, atheism is beneath contempt, for it benefits no one. Let us look upon human life, and begin with the poor and unhappy, since they form the majority upon earth. Come hither, ye crowds of unfortunate ones ; has infidelity any consolation to bestow upon you ? What ! no reply — not a single voice. Hark ! what do I hear ? a hymn of praise ascending with sighs towards the Supreme Lord ! There is no mistaking these — they are the heirs of faith. Let us ask the happy, what can infidelity give them ? Ah ! how sweet it is to believe that these enjoyments will be prolonged beyond this life. With what despair would they not leave this world, if they believed they were forever separated from happiness ; in vain would the wealth of ages accumulate for them ; annihilation would only be a doom, the more frightful and repulsive. Riches, sanctified by religion, will greatly add to felicity, by diffusing therewith an ineffable tenderness of spirit, which would otherwise be inevitably cloyed and indurated by a long course of prosperity, un-

less embalmed in heavenly affections. Religion preserves the soul in perennial bloom; we might call it the holy oil with which Christianity consecrates royalty, and life, and death, to prevent their becoming bitter and unfruitful.

Next on the role, the warrior advances. Can he become infidel? This child of glory, to whom fame is so dear, will he consent to annihilation? . . . The chief captains of antiquity were all remarkable for their religious feeling. Epaminondas, the deliverer of his country, was remarkable as being one of the most pious men of his age. Xenophon, that philosophic soldier, was a model of piety, &c. . . . But there is no character more worthy of admiration than the *Christian hero*; the people love and revere him as a father; he defends the laborer and the harvest, and protects innocence against injustice; he is a kind of war-angel, whom God sends to ameliorate that scourge. The villages open their gates to him immediately upon the sound of his approach; the ramparts fall before his virtues; he is beloved by the soldier, and is the nation's idol; he unites Christian charity to the warrior's courage; his conversation is interesting and instructive; his manners have a graceful courtesy and native address; we are astonished to find so much sweetness in a man accustomed to live in the midst of perils and cruelties; thus is the

honey oft concealed beneath the oak-rind, which has braved many a storm. After another trial, shall we determine that atheism will not do for the soldier? Infidelity will not prove desirable either in a natural or a social state. If morality depends entirely upon the doctrine of a Supreme Lawgiver, and the immortality of the soul, it is not for the interests of parents or children to be skeptical upon this subject. And how, for example, can we conceive of a woman to become an infidel? Upon what can such a frail flower depend, if religion does not sustain her feebleness? Nature's most sensitive plant, ever exposed to disease and the loss of her charms, what will support her, this creature of smiles and tears, if her hope is not beyond this transient existence? If it were for no other reason, for the sake of her beauty a female ought to be pious. Sweetness, submission, sensibility, tenderness, are her portion of endowments bestowed upon her by the Creator; and infidelity will be as a withering blight over these attractions.

Woman is naturally fond of mystery; she loves to be retired; she only half reveals her mind and heart; she may be read as a riddle, yet not fully understood; she is full of secrets as a wife and maiden, who beguiles us by her simplicity; she was formed for virtue, and all those mysterious sentiments of chastity and love: shall this being,

renouncing all the sweet instincts of her nature, attempt, with her rash and feeble hand, to rend the veil which enshrouds Omnipotence ? What would she accomplish by this sacrilegious effort ? Does she imagine, by connecting herself with these ridiculous blasphemies and metaphysics, that we should have a grand idea of her genius ? Most assuredly she has no idea of entering into matrimony. What man, in his senses, would unite himself with an infidel woman ? The unbelieving wife cannot understand her true position ; she occupies her time with arguments about virtues which she fails to practice, or as a devotee of worldly pleasures. A vacant mind, a withered heart, consumed by ennui, she has neither a God to worship, nor domestic duties to occupy the vast chasm in her time. But retribution comes at last ; time travels swiftly onwards, leading old age by the hand. The spectre, with blanched locks and drooping form, icy hands and trembling steps, is seated upon the threshold of this unbelieving woman's abode ; she views his hideous approach, and utters a despairing cry. But who will hear her voice ? Has she a husband ? Alas ! he is there no longer ; many years he has left, in sadness, his dishonored home. Has she children ? Ruined by an impious education, and evil example, what do they care for their mother ! The past is as a barren waste, upon which no lovely

flower of virtue has bloomed, to refresh her present desolation. For the first time it occurs to her, that even religion would be more desirable than her unutterable sufferings. Vain regret ! The natural course of atheism is into irrevocable unbelief, whose fruit is despair. When, in life's closing scenes, the poison of a false philosophy is ossifying the heart; when, over the horizon of the grave, annihilation as a funeral star is slowly ascending; when the gate of repentance is closed up by death; when the seal of unbelief is upon the soul, hope is dead. Oh ! the horrors of that isolation, when, deserted by God and man, she dies — breathing her last sigh upon the callous ear of a mercenary hireling: what a wretched life, what a gloomy end !

What a contrast is the death of a Christian mother ! How beautiful and touching ! She is full of peace and love, and abounding in blessings; she is surrounded by her family and friends; her husband confides in her, her children and her domestics love and respect her: she possesses the confidence of neighbors and friends, as faithfulness to God is the best guarantee of integrity towards men. The faith of this Christian woman is strengthened by her happiness, and her happiness is confirmed by her faith; she believes in God, because she is happy, and she is happy, because she trusts in God.

The goodness of Providence is displayed in the cradle of the nursling: the smile of an infant is, to a mother, the most convincing reality of a supreme happiness; a benevolent hand has provided for all its wants; and she looks upon her child, and then up to her Heavenly Father, with gratitude and prayer. . . . Thus the religious mind argues, from the sensibilities of the soul, the sweet attachments of life, filial piety, conjugal love, maternal tenderness. Infidelity reduces all to the instincts of the brute; and, as the first argument for its system, reveals to you a callous heart. In the Christian worship we are confident that our sufferings will soon have an end. We have the promise that all our tears will be wiped away in our future home. "There shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor any more pain." "For the days of their mourning shall be ended." In the infidel's creed, human griefs are the consuming incense, death is the officiating priest, a coffin the altar, and annihilation the divinity.

REMORSE OF CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE affords another proof of the immortality of the soul. Every man carries within him the tribunal before which he is judged, awaiting the final verdict, which is to confirm the sentence. If vice is but the result of a physical organization, whence arise the terrors which torment the days of prosperous gilt? Why is remorse so terrible, that all the rigors of poverty and virtue are preferred, rather than the gains of ill-gotten wealth? Why hath blood a voice, and the very stones speech? The tiger destroys his prey, and sleeps; man becomes a homicide, and is sleepless; he seeks the desert-places, and yet solitude affrights him; he wanders among the tombs, and yet he dreads the grave. His glance is restless and unquiet; he dare not look upon the festal walls, lest he there read his fatal secret. The very acuteness of his organs of sight and hearing seem to be his especial misery; he sees spectres and shadows everywhere, and by night and day he is surrounded with spies, his ear hears noises when the whole world is in silence, and he imagines poison in every mouthful of food he eats; and from the vest of the friend whom he embraces, he starts as at the touch of a concealed poniard.

Oh, conscience ! thou art no imaginary phantom, nor fear of man's retribution ! I question myself ; I place it in this form : if thou couldst, by a simple desire, kill a man in China, and enjoy his fortune in Europe, with the absolute conviction that it could never be known, wouldest thou cherish such a wish ? No ! I hear a voice from the depth of my soul, which protests so loudly against the indulgence of such a thought, that I cannot for an instant doubt the supremacy of conscience. That is a mournful necessity, which obliges us to deny remorse, in order to obliterate the immortality of the soul, and a future state of retribution. We are well aware that atheism, in its devious windings, has had recourse to this shameful abnegation. Let the poor sophist, writhing in the torture of the gout, exclaim : " Oh, pain ! I will never confess that thou art an evil !" And, though it were possible to find men who are so unfortunate as to be capable of stifling the inner voice, what would be the gain ? We ought not to judge of him who has the full control of his members, by the paralytic cripple, whose limbs refuse to perform their accustomed office ; sin, when it has reached its zenith, is as a canker in the soul : in rejecting religion, we refuse the only remedy which can restore its sensibility to the decayed heart. This wonderful religion of Jesus Christ is, as it were, a second conscience,

to replace the loss man has sustained in the fall. Do we sin by *excess*, by too great prosperity, by violence of passion? She is prompt to warn us of the insecurity of *riches*, and of the illusions of an ardent imagination. Is it, on the contrary, through infirmity, or *weakness*, that we are betrayed, or by poverty, or hardness of heart? She teaches us to despise riches, while, at the same time, she reanimates our languid graces, and awakens us into new life and activity. Her charity is especially superabounding and forbearing towards the transgressor; mercy and compassion are extended to the guilty, and the most miserable wretch she heals with her gentle ministrations. She only requires repentance for the past, and hope and reformation for the future. "But, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans chap. v. 20. The Son of God came to save sinners, and His religion is established as a refuge for the guilty; and Jesus Christ has granted full and free forgiveness to the penitent, to redeem from the curse of the law. The evangelical conscience is a living, tender, and obedient conscience, full of good works, with entire self-renunciation. Although we have been speaking upon the remorse which follows crime, it seems almost superfluous to dwell upon the happiness of virtue. The interior tranquillity which we feel in well-doing is no more the mere combination of

matter, than the reproaches of conscience when we commit a bad action. If sophists maintain that all virtue is but disguised self-love, and that pity is but a refined emanation of this passion, we would ask them if they have never felt an interior impulse to relieve the distressed, or if it has been a dread of returning to second infancy which has attracted them towards innocent childhood? Virtue and tears are the source of hope to man, and the basis of his faith; for, how can he believe in a God, who has no confidence in virtue, and who distrusts the sincerity of tears? We should fatigue the reader, by pausing to show how strongly this interior voice, called conscience, proves the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God. "There is in man," says Cicero, "a power which inclines to good, and which deters from evil, not only before the formation of people and cities, but as ancient as this God by whom the heavens and the earth exist and are controlled; for reason is an essential attribute of Divine intelligence, and this reason, which is in God, must of necessity determine what is vice or virtue."

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH-BED.

BUT it is at the silent portals of the tomb, hovering upon the borders of the celestial world, that Christianity displays its sublimity.

The ashes of the dead have been ever respected in all ancient worship, but it was never dreamed of, to prepare the soul for those unknown shores from which it never returns.

Come ! behold the most beautiful spectacle which earth can present ; come, see a Christian die. This man is no longer a denizen of this world ; his earthly citizenship has ceased ; his relations with society are ended. He no longer dates from time, but henceforth from the cycles of eternity. A minister of Jesus watches beside him, and cheers and consoles him. They commune about the last conflict, and the immortality of the soul : when did antiquity present such a scene ? Socrates died like a philosopher ; but the most ignorant peasant, and the meanest cottager of gospel liberty, are yet more exalted in the power of God, and of a hope full of immortality ! Every day such scenes are realized by the humblest Christian, as he triumphs over the agonies of death.

Religion rocked him in the cradle of life ; and her maternal hand, and her beautiful hymns, will again soothe his slumbers upon the bed of death. She prepares the baptism of this second birth. As the ties of earth are breaking, she opens before him the heavenly portals : already has his soul leaped from his prison-house, and his countenance bears the celestial impress. Entranced, he hears the seraphic melody ; he pants for the blissful region, whither this divine hope bears him, daughter of virtue and of death. This angel of peace hovers over him, and touches with her golden sceptre his wearied eyelids, and gently closes them to the light. He dies ; and, long after he is no more, do his friends keep their silent watch, believing that he still slumbers, so softly has this believer passed away ! “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

TWO VIEWS OF NATURE.

OCEAN — NIAGARA FALLS.

WE shall present to the reader two prospects in nature ; the one upon the sea, and the other upon land ; the one from the midst of the Atlantic waves, the other in the forests of the New World — so that it will be impossible to attribute the majesty of these objects to the designs of men. The ship in which we sailed for America, soon losing sight of land, left us bounded in space by the two azures, above and below us ; a vast palette, as it were, prepared to receive the future creations of some master-artist. The waters changed their hue into that of liquid emerald. Although the wind blew from the east, the rolling waves came dashing on from the west ; vast undulations extended along, as mountain ranges from horizon to horizon, and in their valleys long vistas were opened through the desert of the deep. A beautiful variety of scenery was arranged by these movable landscapes ; sometimes a group of green mounds represented graves in a vast cemetery, separated by furrows ; sometimes the summits, curling surges, resembled white flocks, hovering over the heath ; now the space was

diminished, for want of an object of comparison; but, if a billow reared its crested head, if a wandering wave undulated like a remote coast, or a squadron of sea dogs passed by in the distance, the space opened suddenly before us. We were most powerfully impressed with an idea of magnitude, when a fleecy mist, slowly gathering over the watery waste, seemed to expand immensity itself. How inspiring is the ocean, full of sublime thought, and solemn grandeur! How does the imagination plunge into reveries, either as a wanderer into the north seas, with its ice-hills and tempests, or gloaming over to the sunny isles and orange groves blest with peace and plenty! We oftentimes strolled upon deck at midnight, and watched with the seamen, in profound meditation. Silence reigned, save the dashing of the prow through the billows, while lurid sparks ran with a white foam along the sides of the vessel. The Christian's God, hast thou not written thine Omnipotence upon the great deep, and upon the sparkling firmament? Millions of radiant orbs rolling through the sombre azure of the celestial dome, with the peerless moon in their midst, a shoreless sea, infinity upon the heavens and upon the waters! Never have I been more profoundly affected by Thy majesty, than during these seasons, when, suspended between the stars and the ocean, I had immensity over my head,

and immensity beneath my feet! I am nothing; I am but a lonely traveller; I have often heard scholars dispute upon the existence of the Divine Being, and I could never understand them. But I have always remarked, that it is among the grand scenes of nature that this incomprehensible Being has revealed Himself to the heart of man. One evening (it was profoundly calm) we found ourselves in the beautiful waters which bathe the Virginia shore; every sail was furled; I was engaged below, when the bell sounded which called the crew to prayers. I hastened to mingle my petitions with those of my fellow-voyagers. The officers and passengers were assembled, and the chaplain stood at a little distance from them with his book in his hand; over the poop, the seamen were scattered; our faces were all turned towards the west, whither the prow of the vessel pointed. Through the rigging, in the midst of boundless space, shone the glorious orb of day, whose lustre even then almost blinded our eyes, although it was soon to be hidden from us by its evening plunge amid the saluting waves. From the motion of the stern, it appeared as if this fiery globe every moment changed its horizon. A few floating clouds awaited the moon's ascent in the east; the rest of the sky was serene; and, towards the north, a water-spout, forming a glorious triangle with the luminaries of day and night, glistening with all

the rainbow hues, rose from the sea, like a column of crystal supporting the heavenly archway. He who, in this spectacle, could not see the glory of God, claims our pity. Tears rolled down my cheek, beyond my control, when my hardy companions, removing their tarpaulin hats, began, in a hoarse voice, to offer up their simple praise to that God, who is the guardian of the mariner. How affecting were the prayers of these men, who, from a frail plank, in the midst of the ocean, contemplated a sun-setting in the waves ! How the supplications of these poor sailors to the Father of mercies touched the heart ! The consciousness of our insignificance, excited by the voice of infinity ; our hymns resounding to a distance over the silent waves ; the night approaching, with its perils ; our vessel itself a wonder among so many wonders ; a religious crew, penetrated with awe and admiration ; a suppliant priest ; Omnipotence treading the waves, and supporting the sun at its western couch, and commanding the moon from the eastern hemisphere, and bending a listening ear to the feeble cry of His creatures, wandering through this immensity — this is a scene which surpasses the painter's skill, and the writer's eloquence, and which the whole heart of man is not capacious enough to embrace !

Let us now take the terrestrial view. At evening

twilight I wandered away in the forest, and found myself at some distance from the "Cataract of Niagara;" gradually I perceived the day fading away around me, and I enjoyed in my solitude the splendid spectacle of a night in the forests of the New World. An hour elapsed from the sun-setting, when the moon coquettishly peered over the trees on the opposite side; a delicious breeze accompanied this queen of night from the east, and seemed to precede her in the forests as her balmy breath. The majestic luminary slowly careened through the azure vault; sometimes she alighted upon groups of clouds which resembled snow-crowned mountains. These clouds, folding or expanding their veils, rolled themselves out into transparent zones of white satin, dispersed into light flakes of foam, or formed in the heavens bright beds of down, so lovely to the eye, that you would have imagined you felt their softness and their elasticity. The scene below was not less ravishing; the soft and bluish beams of the moon streamed through the interstices of the trees, and gleams of light penetrated into the obscurity of the most profound darkness. The river, which flowed at my feet, was now lost in the forest, and again reappeared, studded with the brilliant stars which were mirrored upon her waters. In a vast plain, beyond this stream, the silvery moon rested motionless upon the verdure.

Birch trees, trembling in the wind, and scattered here and there, created islands of floating shadows upon this motionless sea of light. Silence and repose reigned around me, save the falling leaves, the sighing night wind, or the occasional hooting of the owl; but at a distance was heard, at intervals, the solemn roar of the falls of Niagara, which was prolonged in the stillness of night, and reverberated from forest to forest, and again died away upon the lonely shore. The grandeur, the awful solemnity of this scene, human language cannot describe; the most resplendent nights in Europe can give no idea of it; the imagination seeks in vain, amid our cultivated fields, to refresh herself; she is everywhere bounded by the habitations of men; but, in these wild regions, the mind is delighted to roam over an ocean of forests, to gaze down into these foaming gulfs, and meditate upon the banks of the lakes and rivers, and, as it were, feel itself alone before God.

YOUTH AND OLD AGE OF THE EARTH.

WE proceed to the last objection, upon the modern origin of the globe. "The earth," it is said, "is an aged nurse, who shows many signs of her decrepitude. Examine her fossils, her marbles, her granites, her lavas, and you will read therein a series of innumerable years, marked by circles, by strata, or by branches, like those of the snake by his rattles, of the horse by his teeth, or of the stag by his antlers." This difficulty has been answered a hundred times by this reply: *God created all things, and undoubtedly created the world, with all its signs of maturity and perfection of arrangement, which we behold and admire.* Indeed, it is more than probable that the Author of nature produced at once old forests and young plantations; and that the animal creation presented the same pleasing contrast of graceful youth with mature age. The oaks, in uprising from the fertile soil, bore, no doubt, in their branches, the parent birds with their young colony. Worm, chrysalis, and creeping insect resting upon the herbage, deposited their golden egg in the forest, or floated through the air. The bee, although she has but

opened to the light, counts already her ambrosial sweets, by generations of roses. We can fancy that the ewe was not without her bleating lambs, nor the linnet without her little ones ; that the fragrant shrubs concealed, amid their leafy verdure, the nightingale, astonished at the warbling notes in which she chants her early loves.

If the world had not, at the same time, been both old and young, the grand, the imposing, and the moral would have been wanting in nature, for these sentiments are essentially maintained by antique objects. Every scene would have lost its novelty and wonders. The fragmented rock would no longer have jutted over the precipice, with its long, grassy pendant ; the woods, wanting in variety, would no longer show their beautiful changes, of curved trees in every direction, and of massive pillars bending over the watery rapids. The inspired thoughts, the magical sounds, the genii, with the sacred awe of the forest, would have been wanting, together with the sombre bowers which serve for their retreats ; and the solitudes of earth and heaven would have remained naked, and destitute of charms, without those columns of oak which unite them together. The very day that ocean rolled forth his reverberating bilows, he doubtless laved rocks already worn by

the waves, shores strewed with specimens of shell-fish, roaring gulfs, and naked cliffs, which protect the shelving beach from the ravages of the waters. Without this original antiquity, the workmanship of the Eternal would have been destitute of majesty and grandeur; and, what could never be the case, nature, in her simplicity and innocence, would have appeared less charming than she is at present in her corruption. A wearisome insipidity of plants, animals, and the elements, would have crowned the earth without poetry. But God was not so crippled, in arranging the bowers of Eden, as infidels pretend. Man, himself the monarch, arises in the full majesty of manhood, in order to be perfectly adapted to the grandeur of his new empire; and his companion, in like manner, arose, with all the graces of youthful simplicity and beauty, to harmonize with the flowers, and the birds, in all the innocence and love of the rejoicing creation.

THE WORLD WITHOUT CHRISTIANITY.

CONJECTURES.

BEFORE closing this work, we shall enter into an examination of the important question which forms the title of this chapter, and by endeavoring to discover what would have been our probable condition at the present day, had not Christianity appeared upon the earth, we shall know better how to appreciate this divine religion. Augustus attained power by crimes, and reigned under the form of virtue. He succeeded as a conqueror, and, to distinguish himself, he maintained order and peace. Not being a great man, he wished to be considered a fortunate prince. He had a peaceful reign, the volcano of corruption slumbered, and this calm was called prosperity. Augustus possessed the genius of circumstances; he reaped the benefits which the true genius had prepared for him, but his good fortune did not remain with him. Tiberius had a supreme contempt for all men, and he did not care to conceal it. The only candor he showed was where he ought to have dissembled; and yet he, base as he was, could not refrain from an exulting exclamation, when he found the Roman senate and people were more dishonorable

than himself. Rome deified Nero: and, for a long time after the death of this tyrant, his spectre made the empire tremble with joy and exultation. Here let us pause, and contemplate Roman manners. Neither Titus, nor Antoninus, nor Marcus Aurelius, could change the foundation. God alone could effect a renovation. The Romans were always a horrible people; their leaders could never have so misled them into detestable vices, unless there had been a certain natural proclivity, and perverse forwardness, to encourage them. Athens, although corrupt, was never execrable; she was devoted to enjoyment, and would sing even in her chains. She discovered that her conquerors had not taken all from her, since they still left to her the temple of the muses. When Rome had virtues, they were virtues against nature. The first Brutus decapitated his son, and the second assassinated his father. There are virtues of position which we too readily take for radical virtue, and which are only the result of localities. At first Rome, in her freedom, was frugal, because she was poor; courageous, because, sword in hand, she came out of a brigand's cave. She always was ferocious, unjust, avaricious, and luxurious; she had nothing to commend her but her talents; her character was odious. Augustus ordered a father and son to kill each other, and they obeyed him. The senate

was too vile even for a Tiberius. . . . This effeminacy of character was united to a frightful corruption of manners. It was the same Nero, already so often quoted, who invented the Juvenalian festivals. The cavaliers, the senators, and the ladies of the first rank, were obliged to engage in theatrical exhibitions, after the example of the emperor, and to degrade themselves by the vilest representations. . . . In these ancient entertainments, death played a prominent part; it was there invited as a contrast, in order to heighten the pleasures of life. What people, but these, could ever have placed such an opprobrium upon life and death, as to play off upon the theatre these two great mysteries of nature, in order to dishonor and to strike out, at one blow, the workmanship of God?

Their slaves were kept at incessant labor, with irons upon their feet; for nourishment, they gave them a little bread, with salt and water; at night, they were shut up underground, where no air could reach them but from a skylight in the arched roof of their dungeon. There was a law, forbidding the destruction of the African lions, reserving them for the Roman spectacles. When an unfortunate creature perished in the arena, torn by a panther, or pierced by the horns of a stag, many invalids ran and bathed in the blood, and received it upon their thirsty lips. Caligula

wished that the Roman people had but one head, that he might cut it off at one stroke. . . . It was a common custom to behead five, and even twenty thousand persons, of all ranks, and all sexes and ages, upon a bare suspicion of the emperor; and the friends of the victims were called upon to assist at these horrid butcheries, and to ornament their houses with flowers and garlands. . . . It is the total extinction of the moral sense which gave to the Romans this facility of dying, which has been so insanely lauded. Suicides are always common among a corrupt people. Man, reducing himself to the instinct of the brute, dies after the same manner. . . . If the Romans became captives, it was owing to their corruption of manners. Servility produces tyranny; and, by a natural reaction, tyranny prolongs servitude. Let us no longer complain of the actual state of society; the most corrupt of modern nations is a nation of philosophers compared with Pagan nations. . . . Tradition has handed down to us an account of the wickedness of men, and of the terrible catastrophies which have invariably followed corruption of manners. May it not be possible, that God has connected the physical and moral order of the universe, in such a manner, that a confusion in one necessarily leads to changes in the other, and that great crimes lead naturally to great revolu-

tions? Thought acts upon the body in an inexplicable manner; man is, perhaps, the thought of the great body of the universe. This greatly simplifies nature, and enlarges infinitely the sphere of man: this fact would also furnish a key for the explanation of miracles, which re-enter into the ordinary course of events. So that the Deluge, the embarrassments, the overthrow of kingdoms and states, have their secret cause in the vices of men; that crime, and its punishment, are the two motive powers placed in the moral and physical scale of the world: the connection is fine, as it makes but one whole out of the creation, which appears to be double at a casual glance. It may have been, that the corrupt Roman empire had drawn from their desert retreats those barbarians, who, without recognising their exterminating mission, by a natural instinct were called "*God's scourge.*" What would have become of this world, if the great oak of Christianity had not preserved the rest of mankind from this new deluge? What would have remained for posterity? How else could these beacon lights have been preserved to us? We may judge of the abyss into which we should have been plunged to-day, if the barbarians had surprised the world under polytheism, by the actual condition of nations where Christianity is extinguished. We should all be Turkish slaves, or something worse still; for Mohammed-

anism is, at the least, founded upon a thread of morality, which it has drawn from the Christian religion. It is, then, very possible that, were it not for the conservative power of Christianity, the shipwreck of society and of her luminaries would have been total. We can never calculate how many ages would have been necessary to recover mankind from the corruption of ignorance and barbarism in which we should find them buried. . . . We find that the Gospel has prevented the destruction of society. Philosophy only served to give a false and impious glare, which, without aiding in removing idolatry, produced the evils and crimes of atheism in the great, leaving superstition to the common people. . . . Jesus Christ may then be called, in a material sense, as He is in a spiritual one, the Saviour of the world. His visit to our earth is, humanly speaking, the greatest event which could ever arrive to men, since it is a part of Scripture prophecy, that the face of the earth is to be renewed. The period of the advent of the Son of man was very remarkable; somewhat earlier, his morality would not have been so absolutely required; the people were still sustaining their ancient laws; a little later, and this divine messenger would have witnessed the disruption of society. Now-a-days, philosophy is our boast;

but surely the frivolity with which religious institutions are treated is anything but philosophical. The Gospel has, in every respect, changed man's condition ; it has far advanced him towards perfection. . . . In the heavens, Christianity has placed but one God ; upon the earth she has abolished slavery. On the other hand, if you regard these mysteries (as we have intimated) as the archetype of the laws of nature, there will be nothing in this to distress an upright mind ; the truths of Christianity, far from demanding the submission of reason, require, on the contrary, its most sublime exercise. This remark is so just — the Christian religion, which they would make us believe is a remnant of barbarism, is so well adapted to the philosophic spirit, that one could almost believe that it was revealed to Plato. Not only the morality, but also the doctrines of the disciples of Socrates bear a striking relation to that of the Evangelist. . . . Here is the great error of those who praise polytheism, for having separated the moral from the religious law, and who complain of Christianity for adopting a different course. They do not perceive that Paganism addresses itself to an immense crowd of slaves ; and that, consequently, it is afraid of enlightening the human race ; that it does everything for

the senses, and makes no provision for the soul; Christianity, on the contrary, who designs and wishes to remove slavery, has revealed to man the dignity of his nature, and taught the doctrines of reason and virtue. We assert, then, that the evangelical religion is intended for a free people, from this simple fact of uniting morality to religion. It is high time to arouse from the supineness in which we have lived for some years past. . . . The fear of God is departing from the rising generation, and already we see the most alarming signs manifested; and the age of innocence is darkened by many heinous crimes.*

What is that philosophy worth, after all, which cannot visit among the poor, but contentedly dwells among the rich, and that might bestow at least a religion upon the cottager; or, rather, that better directed, and worthy of its name, it would level the walls which it has raised up between man and his Maker. . . . Our modern governments undoubtedly owe to Christianity their solidity, and their stability. The lessons of the Gospel make the true philosopher,

* The public papers resound with the crimes committed by youthful criminals of eleven and twelve years of age. The evil must be alarming, when the peasants themselves complain of the vices of their children.

and her precepts, the faithful citizen. . . . Indeed, remarks Montesquieu, we owe to Christianity, and in government, a certain political freedom, and in war a humanity which human nature alone would not have realized. It authorized this inalienable right of the subject to life, liberty, and conscience, wherever rulers are not blinded by self-love and ambition. Let us add, as a crowning blessing, a blessing which ought to be written in letters of gold, in the annals of philosophy: "*The abolition of slavery.*"

As for ourselves, we are fully persuaded that Christianity will arise triumphantly from every ordeal which may be permitted for her purification: we are persuaded that she will bear the severest scrutiny of reason; the deeper she is fathomed, the more secure will prove her foundations. Her mysteries explain man and nature, precept is confirmed by example; her charity, under a thousand forms, has displaced the cruelties of the heathen; her worship is more satisfying to the understanding and the heart, than the pomp and parade of idolatry; to her we owe everything valuable, literature, science, agriculture, the fine arts; she unites morality with religion, and man to God; Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the soul of man, is no less the regenerator of his frame; He has come most happily to coun-

terbalance the deluge of barbarism, and the general corruption of manners. When the proof of miracles is denied to Christianity, the sublimity of its morality will still remain, in the diffusion of its blessings, in the beauty of its ceremonies, to afford adequate proof that it is the most heavenly religion, and the purest worship which mankind ever observed. . . . These reflections and proofs have resulted in the following conviction, namely, that Christianity is perfect, and that men are imperfect. For perfection can never issue out of imperfection. Christianity, then, does not come from man. If it is not from man, it must be from God. If it is from God, it must have come to man by a revelation.

Then Christianity is a revelation from God.

BEAUTIFUL EXTRACTS

*From Chateaubriand's Letter to M. De Fontanes,
upon Madame De Stael's Theory of Perfecti-
bility.*

MY DEAR FRIEND:—

As soon as I received the work of Madame De Stael, in my solitude, I hastened to read it, curious to know what a lady, so intelligent and spirituelle, could say in defence of her doctrine of *Perfectibility*.

Ah! it would be indeed sweet to believe that we become more and more perfect from race to race, and that the son is always better than his father. If any proof could be afforded of this excellence of the human heart, it would be to discover that Madame De Stael possessed the illusive principle in her own heart. Sometimes I fear that this lady, who so often complains of mankind, and yet boasts of their *perfectibility*, should be like the priests who have lost faith in the idol over whose altars they throw incense. . . . You are aware, my dear friend, that it is my folly to see *Jesus Christ* everywhere, as Madame De Stael her *perfectibility*. I have the misfor-

tune to believe, with Pascal, that the Christian religion alone explains the problem of man. Thus, you perceive, I have sheltered myself under the authority of a great name, in order to encourage you to tolerate my contracted notions, and my anti-philosophical convictions. That which Madame De Stael asserts of philosophy, I attribute to religion. . . . Christianity alone has made this warfare between the flesh and the spirit so favorable to great dramatic effect. Thus you see, in Eloisa, the most impetuous and ardent of the passions wrestling with powerful religious convictions. Eloisa loves; she is enthusiastic and impassioned, but she elevates herself above all by a marble wall, and stoical insensibility; eternal rewards and punishments await her fall or her triumph. Dido, on the contrary, only loses an ungrateful lover: but Eloisa is agitated by a totally different care! Her choice must be between God and a faithful lover. And she cannot beguile herself with any cherished hopes, she dare not secretly yield even the smallest iota of her heart: the God whom she serves is a jealous God—a God who will be supremely enthroned, who will punish even the shadow of a thought. He discerns the intents of the heart; no one is to be preferred before him. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” For “I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God.” I am

sorry that Madame De Staël has not *religiously* developed the system of the passions. *Perfectibility* is not, in my opinion, the instrument that is to be used to measure our weakness. Human nature, has it taken a single step in moral science? No! it advances only the physical sciences. . . . Fatal blindness of these systems, Madame De Staël denominates the fidelity of the *martyr folly* in those very acts which, elsewhere, her own generous heart would have praised with enthusiasm. I allude to youthful maidens choosing death, rather than the caresses of tyrants, and to noble men who refuse to bow down to idols, shedding their life-blood in sight of an astonished world, as faithful witnesses for the unity of the Godhead, and the immortality of the soul. I think this is beyond all philosophy. What ought to have been the astonishment of the human race, when in the midst of the most shameful superstitions, everything is God but God Himself, as has been remarked by Bossuet! . . . There are strange contradictions in Madame De Staël's work; sometimes she appears almost a *Christian*, and I am ready to rejoice; but the next moment *philosophy* gains the ascendancy. Oftentimes, inspired by her natural sensibility, which tells her there is no real beauty or pathos without religion, she allows her soul to escape. But, suddenly, argumentation awakens, and carries her off from

heart impulses. To me her work is a singular mixture of truth and error. . . . I have dwelt among the American Indians, and I have remarked that they always speak of time passed, but never of a time to come. Some grains of dust, in the depth of the tomb, remain to them as the witness of a passed existence; but there is nothing to point out to them an existence in the unknown future. This expectation of the future, which is so familiar to us, is yet one of the greatest abstractions at which the thought of man can arrive. The unconscious savage knows not, as we do, that grief overflows grief; that the soul, without recollection or forethought, does not centre in itself the past, the present, and the future, in a sort of mournful eternity. . . . The *moral* beau-ideal is formed in the same manner as the *physical* ideal. Certain movements of the soul are unveiled; for the soul, like the body, has its shamefacedness and concealments. And I cannot avoid remarking, that man is the only being among living creatures that is susceptible of being represented more perfect than in nature, and thus approximating to the Divinity. It is a grand idea of the Author of our being, and a proof of our immortality. . . . Intellect may exist without religion, but it is almost impossible to possess genius. It is deplorable to find men, in the eighteenth century, who, instead of using

the perfect instrument which Racine and Bossuet employed to strike the key-note of their eloquence, have recourse to the scale of a narrow philosophy, which subdivides the soul in degrees and minutes, and reduces the whole universe, God Himself included, into a simple subtraction of nothing! Every writer who refuses to believe in a God, Creator of the world, and Judge of men, to whom He has given an immortal spirit, banishes forever infinity from his works. He imprisons thought in a sphere of matter, from which he cannot disenthral himself. He no longer sees anything noble in nature; all her operations are corrupted and defiled. The vast ocean is but a drop of bituminous water; the mountains are small protuberances of limestone or quartz. The two splendid luminaries in the heavens, which cheer our daily toils, and evening watches, are only two heavy masses, formed by chance by we know not what fortunate collection of matter. Thus all is disenchanted, everything is uncovered to the unbeliever, even man himself he professes to understand; and, if you could listen to him, he would explain to you what your thought is made of, how it moves, and whence it came, and also by what mechanism your heart is warmed and stirred, at the recital of a noble action. What a wonderful comprehension of that which the grandest genius has failed to fathom!

But approach, and see what these great luminaries of philosophy are made of. Look down into this tomb ; contemplate this shrouded corpse, this shadowy statue robed in a winding-sheet ; this is the *whole* of the atheist. But as I have a desire to convert my neighbor, I acknowledge to you, in confidence, that I would give a great deal to see Madame De Stael take refuge under the drapery of religion. This is what I would dare to tell her, if I had the honor of her acquaintance : " You are, undoubtedly, a superior woman ; you are strong-minded, and your imagination is oftentimes original and charming. . . . Your style is often brilliant and elevated. But, in spite of all these advantages, your work is very far from being what it ought to become. The system is monotonous, without spirit, and too full of metaphysical expressions. We are repulsed by the sophistry of the sentiments. Learning makes no amends where the heart is sacrificed to the intellect. Whence originate these faults ? It is from your philosophy. This is an essential defect in your work, or, is there really any eloquence without religion ? You have, in order to supply man's need of an eternity of hope, been obliged to form it out of your system of *perfectibility* upon earth, in order to replace this infinity, which you refuse to see in the heavens. If you desire fame, return to religious principles. I am convinced

that you have in you the germ of a work infinitely more beautiful than any which you have yet produced. Your talents are but partially developed; philosophy has crushed you; and, if you retain your opinions, you will never attain the heights to which you might reach, by following the pathway which has conducted a Pascal, Bossuet, and Racine to immortality." Thus would I appeal to Madame De Stael's love of glory. But, when I come to the article of happiness, in order to make my sermon less wearisome, I would vary my style. I would borrow the language of the forest, which is permitted to me in the character of a savage. I would address my neophyte: "You appear to be unhappy; you often complain, in your work, of wanting hearts to understand you: do you know that there are certain souls who seek in vain, throughout all nature, for congenial spirits (who are made for each other), and who are condemned by the Great Spirit to an eternal widowhood? If this is your afflictive case, religion is your only remedy. The word *philosophy*, in the language of Europe, seems to me to correspond to the word *solitude* in the idiom of savages. For, will *philosophy* ever be able to fill up the vacuum of our days? Canst thou people solitudes with deserts? Here is a female from the Appalachian mountains, who says: there are no good genii, for I am unhappy, and so are all the inhabitants of

the hamlets in the valleys; and, moreover, I have never yet met any man, however favored, and how joyous soever his mien, who had not a hidden grief. The heart the most serene in exterior, resembles the natural wells of the Alachua savannahs;* the surface appears to you calm and pure; but, when you look into the depths of the tranquil lake, you perceive a huge monster, which the wells have nourished amid their waters. The woman wishes to consult the juggler of the desert of Scambre, to inquire if there are any good fairies. The juggler replies to her: Lily of the waters, upon what wilt thou lean, if there are no good

* These natural fountains (or *wells* as they are called) may be found at the base of the Appalachian mountains, in the Floridas. Each well issues from the centre of a hill, planted with orange trees, evergreen oaks, and catalpas. This hill opens, in the form of a crescent, towards the savannah, and a stream of water flows from the well through this aperture. The trees overshadowing the fountain give a perfectly black color to the water beneath; but, at the base of the mount, at the mouth of the stream, upon which the light reflects through this channel, and glistens over this lake as a mirror, it has the magical effect which the glass produces in the camera obscura of the painter. This charming retreat is the habitation of a huge crocodile, reposing in the middle of the basin; and which, from the greenish cast of his coat, and jets of colored spray from his immense nostrils, you would take for a bronze dragon in some grotto among the groves of Versailles.

genii? Thou, above all others, shouldst believe in them, for the sole reason that thou art unhappy. What is there in life to thee, without happiness, and without hope? Occupy thyself in good deeds; fill up thy solitary hours with benevolent plans. Be as a star to the unfortunate, expand thy modest light in the shade; be witness to the tears which flow in silence, that the unhappy may fasten their eyes upon thee without being dazzled with thy superior lustre. Behold the only means of finding the happiness of which thou art in search! The Great Spirit has only stricken thee, in order to awaken thee to the woes around thee, and that thou shouldst hasten to their relief. If thy heart is like the wells of the crocodile, it is also as the tree which yields its balsam for the wounds of men, when the iron has entered its fibres. The juggler of the desert of Scambre having thus spoken to the woman from the Appalachian mountains, re-enters the crevice of his rock."

Adieu, my dear friend, I love you and embrace you with all my heart.

THE AUTHOR OF THE GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY.

The touching allusion made to the "sandal tree" by Chateaubriand, has reminded us of an

exquisite poetic scrap from the pen of J. Edmonston, which we insert, as not unworthy of its place among these clustering gems.

“ When, on a fragrant sandal tree,
The woodman’s axe descends,
And she who bloomed so beauteously,
Beneath the weapon bends —
E’en on the edge that wrought her death,
Dying, she breathes her sweetest breath,
As if to token, in her fall,
Peace to her foes, and love to all.

“ How hardly man this lesson learns,
To smile and bless the hand that spurns ;
To see the blow, to feel the pain,
And render only love again !

One had it, but He came from heaven ;
Reviled, rejected, and betrayed,
No curse He breathed, no plaint He made ;
But when in death’s dark pang He sighed,
Prayed for his murderers, and died.”

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